



PHD

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FAITH

submitted by P.F. Simpson
for the degree of PhD
of the University of Bath
1989

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ABSTRACT

Faith

This thesis addresses the question "What is faith?" and the relationship between faith and decision making. The study describes the development of an organization arising out of the faith of two individuals, John and Pat Blake. The ensuing discussion is concerned with "the practice of faith", the act of believing in situations of uncertainty and risk, rather than with any particular "body of faith". The content of the faith observed in this study is Christian but the process of faith that is described could apply to the practice of any believer. This process is described as arising out of three forms of meaning which are grounded in behaviour through the acts of choice and commitment. The resultant behaviour is the "practice of faith" which, whilst having power to achieve desired results, can become a way of life.

For Helen

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FOREWORD

I first met John and Pat Blake in 1976 when I was fifteen years of age: they were to be the new youth club leaders at the Baptist Church I attended. It was not a large youth club at the time, nine or ten of us all about the same age as myself. John and Pat decided to form a "Youth Club Committee" comprising the four of us who wanted to be on it, and invited us all to Sunday lunch.

We hardly knew this couple. As a result, the atmosphere was tense and the conversation stilted as Pat brought out the individual plates with beef and a round yorkshire pudding for each of us. Tony, a friend of mine since the age of six, was sitting opposite. He blurted out "Cor, is that all?!". The conversation died, but embarrassment was cut short by uproarious laughter as Tony glared at me and said "What did you kick me for?". The ice was broken.

We laughed about Tony's manners, and at his claims that he was "only joking" when he had said it. John and Pat were not offended either way and seemed to find it as funny as all of us. We chatted happily, warming to this couple who treated us as equals rather than as youth. The conversation calmed as we ate and we questioned Pat and then John on their previous church and on their work. Pat was a Nursing officer and John a Trainee Nurse. Tony, joking again, made suggestive remarks concerning John's manliness. I wondered if these "liberated adults" would tolerate such innuendo, and glanced at John who was sitting next to me at the end of the table.

He looked me straight in the eye, and gently squeezing my knee underneath

the table, said, "It's not true is it Pete?". As the colour drained from my cheeks I remember thinking, "No one else can see his hand under the table". Suddenly there was uproar again, John was laughing and hoots came from the rest of the table; "Look at his face" someone said. Fortunately I was not the butt of the joke for long. While John was squeezing my knee Mark, at the other end of the table, had been taking a drink of orange squash. In a fit of laughter, he expelled this with full force through both nostrils. Shortly we were all crying with uncontrollable laughter.

This story has been told to just about anyone who has never heard "how we first met".

Case Study: an Overview

This case study is about John and Pat and about an episode in their life that is, in some ways, unusual even for them. The main period of concern is from the beginning of 1984 until the end of 1988. However, in order to gain a fuller understanding, this study also looks at certain events and characteristics of their lives both before and after this episode.

Pat is now in her mid-forties and John is six years younger. They ran youth clubs in Southampton for a number of years. Pat trained as a nurse, and succeeded in gaining promotion at each stage of her career, attaining to Nursing Officer at a Hospital in Southampton when I first met her. John has trained variously as a Quantity Surveyor, Electrician, Theatre Technician and as a Nurse. They have one son. Nearly twenty two years ago Pat, whilst unmarried, had a son, Peter Waters. When Pete was six, Pat and John were married and he decided to adopt John's name and became Pete Blake. At the beginning of 1984 Pete was sixteen years old.

Pat had suffered with rheumatism and arthritis in her legs and hip joints for a number of years. In 1982 she was given compulsory retirement on the grounds of ill-health, unable to walk from ward to ward as her job required. She also had a number of "scares" with blood clots forming in her legs because of the deteriorating circulation. If these had sent off clots to her heart or lungs, Pat could have died.

In the autumn of 1982 they moved from Southampton to Plymouth. John obtained a job as resident nurse in a residential home for delinquent boys. Pat's health grew worse and she became very depressed. In the Easter of 1983 they went away to a Christian holiday for the week, and during a late night prayer meeting Pat "had an amazing experience of God. He healed me."

This healing lead to a "sense of purpose" that gained a focus in a recurring vision throughout the following summer. This vision was of a house, and outside were standing John and Pat and between them was one of their youth club members from Southampton, Shane. He had become a Christian a number of years before and with John and Pat's help had avoided a prison sentence for theft and was changing his way of life. They interpreted this vision as a call from God to establish a residential home to help young people like Shane.

At the beginning of 1984 they sold their house and John gave up his job. Without a salary or any regular income they began to work full-time helping young people who had a need, and to search for a property suitable for residential work. They also sought finance for such a project. In the meantime they had been given a small three bedroomed ex-council house to live in. From there, and from a small office in the centre of Plymouth that they

were also provided with rent-free, they carried on the work.

In the April they were joined by Lynn, from Bristol, who had heard what they were doing and wished to work with them. In the July I joined them as "Administrator", and to carry out the research for this thesis. I worked in this capacity for a year, living with John and Pat in Plymouth. I then returned to Bath and maintained my involvement in an informal capacity and later as a member of the various organizational committees that were formed.

Over the following years a number of people joined and left the work. A trust was formed in an attempt to develop the professional operation and standing of the organization, and attempts were made to obtain charitable status. In the December of 1984 a house was found that was believed suitable: 78, Durnford Street. However, no finance was available to purchase it.

During 1985 John spent three months at Bible College. The raising of finance did not progress notably, but John and Pat and the group of individuals that had formed the trust were able to take over the shell of a limited company, Allied Housing Plymouth Ltd, a Housing Society with charitable status. Through this means funding unexpectedly became available through the Devon and Cornwall Housing Association. Early in 1986 contracts were exchanged on the house in Durnford Street, and completion took place in May.

The housing association purchased the property for ninety thousand pounds and spent a further forty thousand pounds over the next year in bringing it up to a satisfactory state for fire regulations for a residential property, and in equipping it for use. This took over a year.

In the interim the Spring Trust obtained charitable status and was established as a vehicle to employ John and Pat, who were unable to receive remuneration from Allied Housing (Plymouth) Ltd and be involved on the committee of the housing society because of legal restrictions on payment to committee members. In the middle of 1987 John and Pat moved in and began to take in residents.

Throughout the preceding three and a half years John and Pat had experienced difficulties of one form or another. The stresses of "living by faith" were great, and they were often worried about money and whether they would ever achieve their goal. The process of buying the house was also stressful, with a number of "technical" difficulties along the way. By the time that they moved in to 78 Durnford Street John and Pat were exhausted and more than a little jaded. The stresses of running a residential home then came as a further pressure.

Towards the end of the year their health was suffering badly. Moreover, John and Pat did not want to spend all of their time looking after the running of the house. They were already developing their vision for a wider ranging work, involving marriage guidance counselling, youth counselling and running training seminars. The Spring Trust arranged with Allied Housing (Plymouth) Ltd to take over the management of the house and provided live-in wardens. John and Pat moved out of 78 Durnford Street at the end of 1987 into a house for their own use. The Spring Trust provided this, and a car, and a salary for John and Pat.

The difficulties began to grow as John and Pat disagreed with the way that the house was being run. The situation in the house was certainly not good,

with a number of things needing attention. Furthermore, the financial state of the business was not good. As time progressed a divergence of opinion grew between John and Pat and the other committee members and trustees. This divergence caused John and Pat a great deal of discomfort, but the conflict of opinions continued to grow.

Eventually, John and Pat were offered a counselling job in London with a Christian group of practising GPs. After months of agonizing and battling, John and Pat resigned from the committee and relinquished control of the work. They moved to London late in 1988, leaving the organization that they had established in the hands of the remaining committee members.

One of the larger churches in Plymouth was approached to consider taking over running the work. They accepted on a provisional basis, taking over responsibility for one year. The house now has new wardens and is half full. Allied Housing (Plymouth) Ltd still exists to oversee the work and to liaise with the Devon and Cornwall Housing Association. John Smyth, the pastor of the church running the house, is optimistic about its future.

For me, as a focus of this thesis, this episode is examined as a study in the practice of faith. For John and Pat it was a period of dramatic change in their way of life. As John observed, two years into the work, for them

"Things could never go back to the way they were before."

Parameters for Assessment

In the concluding chapter, I include a self-assessment, commenting on the extent to which I feel satisfied with this study. The criteria that I use are recorded below because I think this will be helpful to others in

understanding the task that I set myself.

1. - making connections, creative theory building, originality;
2. - personal development as a test of validity, practising what I preach;
3. - appreciation of the data;
4. - degree of risk, degree of difficulty;
5. - theory generated from data rather than mere application of borrowed theories to the data, whilst demonstrating an appreciation and application of relevant literature;
6. - (given parameters 1, 2, 4) strength of argument.

PART ONE

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study of faith, based upon a period of involvement in the practice of faith. This is a case study of a particular series of events and of particular individuals rather than a general study of faith. However, if there is a central proposition, or to borrow Kelly's (1955) terminology, a "fundamental postulate" that has driven the analysis (for there are a number of "working hypotheses" that have been of influence along the way) then it is this: that there is a difference between "living life" and "understanding life". Kierkegaard (1941) expressed it this way:

"Life must be lived forwards but it can only be understood backwards."

It is this distinction that is at the root of the difference between an "action perspective" and "systems theory" (Silverman 1972). It is the difference between knowing what decision to make and actually acting upon that decision. These are sometimes referred to as "espoused theories" and "theories-in-action" (Ackoff and Emery 1972), which are known to be sometimes confusingly at odds with one another.

Doing things is a different thing to thinking about those things. Living life is different to understanding life. This case study attempts to capture something of the flavour of "living life" in the practice of faith. This has been a difficult task at times because a thesis is an attempt to "understand

life". However, there is a medium that is well suited to the attempt of bridging this divide between living life and understanding life: the story.

The story teller does not seek primarily to educate but to entertain. In any good story there are lessons to learn, but those lessons are secondary. They are not emphasised by the story teller but are there for the listener to take if he or she so wishes. In its way the story is an experience of life, albeit a life in the imagination. In the case of "true stories" it is a life that is vicariously experienced by those hearing the story. It is the same of all good stories that the most important thing is the experience rather than the lessons that are learned. That is why good stories can be heard over and over again.

This thesis contains a good story. The story is about two people, John and Pat Blake, who decided to do some things they believed needed to be done. I am involved in the story at different times but most of the story is told by John and Pat. I have let the main actors tell their own story because they seem to tell it best.

The rest of the thesis is the product of my own reflections and attempts to understand the story. The lessons that I draw from the story are about faith because this interested me and it seemed as though it was important. There is also a part of the thesis, the "Methodology", which is concerned with how I went about developing an understanding of the story.

This introduction gives the beginnings of an understanding about faith and what it means to practice faith.

Faith as a Way of Life

The practice of faith is not necessarily a profound thing. In one of its most basic forms it can merely be to believe what someone has told you. However, it is unusual in certain forms, requiring great fortitude and perseverance. In such cases its development is more complex, perhaps encompassing a whole life time. It is the latter form that is the interest of this thesis.

It was first of interest to me because it seemed to do something. That something is expressed by James (1904):

"Faith beforehand in an uncertified result is the only thing that makes the result come true." (p59)

Of particular interest was the manner in which faith brought about uncertified and otherwise unobtainable results. John and Pat had ideas about what they wanted to do and how they wanted to do it. However, rather than look at the "facts" or circumstance of the situation, they decided on the final goal and started heading towards it. They did not work out the route, they just set off because they believed that they would get there. This is unusual in comparison to most recommended means of problem solution or resolution. Goethe, however, suggested a similar approach:

"Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it."

To be quite accurate, John and Pat did have reasons for believing that they would get to their goal: they trusted God. They had some ideas about how they would achieve their end, but most of these turned out to be wrong. This did not stop them, however, because they trusted God. At times they had no

ideas at all: they did not know how they would get to where they were going. However, they kept on going anyway. This is the practice of faith. They said that their faith was "in God". The implications and meanings of this are, I believe, complex and important. The fundamental aspect of this "relationship of faith" was that it changed their perception of their own activity because it was no longer just two of them active, but three.

The practice of faith is a creative act: it serves to bring into being that which would otherwise fail to exist. In the quote above, James suggests that it helps to construct the result that is being sought. At the beginning this aspect was of most importance to me. In some ways it is still important because there is power in the practice of faith. However, the practice of faith is about more than the ability to achieve goals.

Theoretically James' proposition may be argued from a positivist stand point, establishing testable, or falsifiable, hypotheses for experiment. James argued against the positivist philosophy but his proposition concerning faith is framed in this manner. The argument of this thesis is more existential in approach, addressing the attainment of result as one part of the whole personal experience that is the practice of faith rather than as an objectively determinable event.

The practice of faith is about a "way of life". Consider, in illustration, the story of Thomas More, born in London 1478, and martyred on the 6th July 1535 for refusing to acknowledge Henry VIII as head of the Church. Imprisoned for a long period while the prosecution struggled to form the case of high treason, More wrote the book, "Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation" (1534). In this he states the case "that for a foundation men must needs

begin with faith",

"Sith all our principal comfort must come of God, we must first presuppose in him to whom we shall with any ghostly counsel give any effectual comfort one ground to begin withal, whereupon all that we shall build must be supported and stand; that is to wit, the ground and foundation of faith, without which had ready before, all the spiritual comfort that any man may speak of can never avail a fly. For likewise as it were utterly vain to lay natural reasons of comfort to him that hath no wit, so were it undoubtedly frustrate to lay spiritual causes of comfort to him that hath no faith. For except a man first believe that Holy Scripture is the word of God, and that the word of God is true, how can a man take any comfort of that that the Scripture telleth him therein? Needs must the man take little fruit of the Scripture, if he either believe not that it were the word of God, or else ween that though it were, it might yet be for all that untrue. This faith as it is more faint or more strong, so shall the comfortable words of Holy Scripture stand the man in more stead or less." (p151)

The dialogue is a personal revelation: it is a reflection of the tribulation experienced by More himself as he waited to be tried with threat of execution. He argues that to cope with this tribulation, to gain comfort from spiritual counsel, it was necessary for him to draw upon the foundation of his faith. It was this faith in God, built up in him over his lifetime, that enabled him to believe the comfort of Scripture, even through doubt and anguish. He likens such faith to intellect, such that one may not reason with one who has "no wit" or intelligence, similarly one cannot believe what

is told if one has no faith.

This sort of faith cannot be picked up or dropped at whim: it is established over years. To attempt to believe when it is expedient will be ineffectual because at heart the actor will believe "it might yet be for all that untrue". With his renowned "sober mirth" he suggests that comfort so offered, "can never avail a fly".

More's faith had been built over a life time of service to his God and his Church. Whilst in the spartan room of the prison cell he told his daughter that if it had not been for his responsibility to his wife and his children he would have entered Holy Orders, "as strait a room as this, and straiter too". This was a deep faith that governed and directed his way of life.

The practice of faith is evidenced in the believing of that which would not be believed without that faith. For More the practice of his faith was to take comfort in his tribulation, comfort in the promises of God from Scripture that at death he would meet God. On the evening of his execution, having been condemned by the perjury of Rich, the crown counsel, he wrote to his daughter,

"I cumber you, good Margaret, much, but I would be sorry if it should be any longer than tomorrow. For tomorrow is St Thomas' Eve, and the Octave of St Peter, therefore tomorrow long I to go to God, that were a day very meet and convenient for me." (pX)

More was aware that he had "run the good race" and he was ready to meet God, confident that he had kept the faith. His faith was effective to see him through his tribulation.

We may not test More's faith in any objective sense, to see if his faith did make "the uncertified result come true", at least not this side of the grave. This demands an existential approach to faith rather than realism. It can be argued that More, albeit humbly, knew that his practice of faith had succeeded in attaining the result that he desired. It had seen him through to the end without denying his God and his Church. However, this is not the most important understanding that I have gathered from this study of the practice of faith.

The case under study in this thesis is in some ways more tangible than this example of sacrificial faith. It is concerned ostensibly with the development of an organization rather than solely with the integrity and courage of an individual. However, integrity and courage are not absent nor unimportant. These, as well as the "attainment of results" are now of interest to me in considering the practice of faith.

Particularly at the beginning of their venture, the test for John and Pat in their practice of faith was the establishment of a residential house for young women. However, as an objective test this is inadequate both for the observer and for John and Pat.

For the observer, this event could, conceivably, occur without the practice of faith. It is therefore no real test of James' proposition. Apart from the most trivial of cases, it is meaningless to consider any form of repetition of the test. The story contained in this thesis, as an objective test, is therefore meaningless.

Similarly, for John and Pat, if they had not established the house, the "test" would not, in all likelihood, have been final and conclusive: their faith would not have been in vain, for, as Pat reflected at one point along the way

"I've come to the point where I don't really care if we get the house or not: it's not that that is important. We've just got to get on with the work that God has given us to do and stop sitting around waiting for the house to happen."

Faith means believing in what you are doing. This can even involve altering your understanding at a later date to make it fit better with what is happening! However, such a statement could be easily misconstrued: the necessary adjunct is that faith involves integrity.

Having said that this study is "more tangible" than More's sacrificial faith, it has been of concern to me that the tangibility of this study is in question given a more traditional approach to the task of research. I have, however, been forced to recognise and accept that this is the nature of the subject: faith is a personal experience. Moreover, it is a personal response to personal experience. In amongst the beauties and the warts of everyday life, faith has its home. There are those that would suggest that such a subject is best left unsearched, for "What is the point if the conclusion is mere fanciful posturing?". One answer is that the conclusion of any human being, believer, Prime minister, or scientific researcher, is a form of posturing, a mere "presentation of self" (Goffman 1959). As such the task begs attention, the difficulty of the task meriting greater effort rather than less.

The practice of faith is about "everyday life" and living. It is this that is now important to me when I consider this practice of faith. As they have practiced their faith, John and Pat have had moments of ecstatic happiness. They have also had moments of the most terrible desperation and depression. They have succeeded in achieving goals, but they have also experienced failure. They have done things well and messed things up; they have had a pot of tea in bed; they have kept on going and they have stopped; they have made toast in the front room; they have impressed people and they have irritated people; they have gone on holiday to Tenerife; they have gained support and experienced opposition; they have laughed and they have cried; they have watched the television; they have loved and they have hated; they have enjoyed a takeaway chinese meal.

All of these, and more besides, seem to be the substance of what is important to me about the practice of faith. John and Pat have a particular way of life. This thesis does not attempt to judge this way, merely to listen to their story and draw some conclusions about what it is to practice faith. The things that were important to John and Pat were important, positively or negatively, because of their contribution to or detracton from the direction in which they chose to go. It is this choice of direction that is the quintessential phenomenon of faith as a way of life. All of the activities mentioned in the previous paragraph, to a greater or lesser extent, are drawn to a focus in this direction. This is quite different to a way of life that does not have such a focus.

This personal nature of the practice of faith forms the basis of later argument in support of an essentially phenomenological and existential approach to this study.

The Practice of Faith: A Focus of Attention

This study is primarily concerned with the action of individuals, not with a particular body of understanding, not even the content of a particular body of faith. The "faith" of the actors in this study is Christian, but this is not a treatise in support of nor opposition to this faith. The focus of attention is the process that has been termed the "practice of faith".

Faith is concerned with current beliefs about future events, but the focus of attention is not any form of forecasting; neither is it a rationale for a conception of cognitive systems in which the development of thinking enhances an individual's ability to predict and control his relation to the environment (Kelly 1955, Freud 1887, Piaget 1954, Eden, Jones and Sims 1983). It can include these, but predominantly the concern is with the practice of believing in the present for something in the future, with the practice of adopting an attitude of certainty.

This is of interest to those with a concern for organizational theory because, if not addressing the problem of how to reduce uncertainty in the environment, it addresses the experience of uncertainty in the practising decision maker. The modern day manager with "bounded rationality" (Simon 1982) will face uncertainty daily and yet be expected to cope. The organizational theorist has tended to ask, "How may we extend the bounds of the decision maker's rationality?", with solutions that range from increased data collection to techniques for handling the data that exists already in a more efficient manner. This thesis would ask, "Why not also enable the manager to better cope with the unsettling, inhibiting experience of uncertainty?". The practice of faith involves this.

Moreover, in this time of awareness of the individual and the concomitant desire for personal as well as organizational growth and development, the practice of faith is concerned with the integrity of the individual. The individual practising faith is not subject to the whims and peculiarities of a fickle environment but is himself seeking to "predict and control" (Kelly 1963). The environment may indeed deal out weighty blows (Weick 1979a) but these may be considered mere temporary setbacks, and defined by the recipient in multitudinous ways. Thomas More was able to preserve his calm and dignity in the face of death, convicted by the testimony of a lying crown counsel, saying only

"In truth, Mr Rich, I am more sorry for your perjury than for my peril." (pX)

"In truth" I would hope that the practice of faith would lead to more objectively reassuring results than this, but the confident assurance provided to the actor in the practice of faith can serve to maintain the integrity of the individual in the face of the most severe provocation. The practice of faith can be a risk, but facing the consequences can lead to a personal "authenticity", the actor "involved as a whole person, not hiding behind a role" (Reason and Rowan 1981).

It is suggested that the practice of faith is a focus of attention that is of interest for the reasons of coping with uncertainty and for personal integrity. It is of interest for other reasons, some of which will become evident from the text of this thesis. It will be apparent, therefore, that this study is believed to be applicable, in principle, to a wide range of situations and individuals, not merely to those who hold to the Christian faith. If a faith is held, then the practice of that faith may follow

similar paths to those recorded here.

The Nature of Faith

Cooper and McGaugh (1966) suggest that:

"Faith is a complex form of attitude involving deep affective meaning. It refers to a system of attitudes that describes a specific and fundamental belief in a person or principle or conception which may or may not be shared by others. Faith stands between 'belief' and 'ideology'. It is belief in that it is a prediction, it tells what will happen in the future. It is ideology in that it may be an elaborate cognitive system which purports to explain some phenomenon... Also, faith incorporates personal identification; the individual surrenders self to a predetermined future." (p27)

Faith is not merely belief, which is an essentially cognitive phenomenon, but is a "complex form of attitude". Kiesler (1971) records that

"An attitude is said to have three components: the affective component (feelings), the cognitive component (thoughts), and the behavioural component (predispositions to act)." (p4)

This highlights the areas that we may expect to be of significance in this study. With respect to the second of these components, the difficulty of incorporating a consideration of "feelings" in a scientific study has long been recognised. Sartre (1939) for example, suggests that

"For the time being, psychology should endeavour not so much to collect the facts as to interrogate the phenomena. For instance, it should be recognised that emotion does not exist considered

as a physical phenomenon." (p29)

A satisfactory solution to these difficulties is not reached in this thesis: feelings are by their very nature difficult for an observer to comment upon, even to record. However, this difficulty applies to all subjective phenomena, both cognitive and behavioural. Silverman (1972) argues that

"The nature of social life implies that the concepts employed in sociology should not be applied without taking into account the subjective meanings of those who are being observed." (p223)

As will be evident, the affective meaning of certain events is significant, or "deep", for John and Pat in a number of situations. Methodologically, the story provides vicarious experience of the events that were important for John and Pat: we will have feelings about the events. Like John and Pat, we may know what it is either to accept these feelings or reject them. More than this, like John and Pat, we may construct interpretations that may be placed upon these experiences. A sensible and informative analysis of such phenomena is difficult. Aware of Sartre's caution, the validation of any analysis must be what Moustakas (1967) terms "human validation", a confirmation of "meaning and essence" as experienced by the reader.

More accessible is the cognitive component of the attitudes that comprise the faith of John and Pat. This accessibility is the result of the more direct relation between cognitions and linguistic expression. Following Eden et al (1979), use will be made of Kelly's "Psychology of Personal Constructs" (1955). Eden argues that

"To use his own theories Kelly pragmatically subscribed to the belief that a system of personal constructs could be modelled as

a system of verbal tags, so linguistics and cognition were related in the practice of discovering the form and content of a construct system." (p10)

In this study I have made use of taped accounts of John and Pat talking about their work, and of my conversations with them, particularly the stories that they frequently told. All of these have provided a record of their construction of these events, and therefore a picture of the cognitive meaning that these events held. Kelly's theory of personal constructs is appropriate in that it shares a similar underlying philosophy to that adopted in this thesis, rooted in existentialism and relativism, termed "constructive alternativism".

Emerging Paradigms

Emerging paradigms, (Reason and Rowan 1981, Kuhn 1970, Popper 1974, Lakatos 1978) contain an appreciation of the nature and importance of faith, even if this is only implicit. The main objective of this thesis will be to provide a more explicit picture.

Boothroyd (1978) argues that

"There is in the OR world no escape from this essential feature of the human condition! You will terminate your enquiries consciously or unconsciously at some logically incomplete point. You cannot get to a point of logical finality for yourself nor can you truthfully offer it to anyone else." (p84)

An absence of "logical finality" is the space that can be filled by faith. Faith enables the act of living forwards rather than what may be called

"logical paralysis". Popper (1974) criticised the positivist view of science on the grounds that the scientist does not observe objective facts and build theories from them, but he begins with theories and tries them against observed phenomena. Karl Gauss, the mathematician, illustrates this practice with his self-observation:

"I have had my solutions for a long time, but I do not yet know how I am to arrive at them."

Popper argued further that no theories ever progress beyond the conjectural; discoveries, therefore, lead not to final, objective knowledge, the truth, in the traditional sense, but to a new theory which is then used in a similar way.

We have an experience of knowing through the commonality (Kelly 1955) that we have with others; indeed the social phenomenon of 'common sense' illustrates this point well. Popper refers to this as 'intersubjectivity', a notion used powerfully by Eden, Jones, Sims and Smithin (1981).

However, arguments concerning 'certainty' and 'the nature of knowledge' can rapidly enter the circular 'chicken and egg' dilemma to which there is seemingly no solution. Popper argues that the beginning lies with hypotheses or expectations. He elucidates:

" the problem 'Which comes first, the hypothesis (H) or the observation (O)?' is soluble; as is the problem 'Which comes first, the hen (H) or the egg (O)?' The reply to the latter is 'An earlier kind of egg'; to the former, 'An earlier kind of hypothesis.' It is quite true that any particular hypothesis we choose will have been preceded by observations - the

observations, for example, which it is designed to explain. But these observations, in their turn, presupposed the adoption of a frame of reference: a frame of expectations: a frame of theories. If they were significant, if they created a need for explanation and thus gave rise to the invention of a hypothesis, it was because they could not be explained within the old theoretical framework, the old horizon of expectations. There is no danger here of an infinite regress. Going back to more and more primitive theories and myths we shall find unconscious, inborn expectations." (Popper 1974) (p47)

A spiral of 'Observation' through 'Hypothesis' through 'Observation' through 'Hypothesis' and so on, this is not a straight line relationship because there is a strong relationship between successive hypotheses and successive observations. However, the system is never closed, which is why the process never attains to perfect knowledge but perpetually remains conjectural. This is the nature of construction, as Kelly uses the term, successively laying brick upon brick. Knowledge is therefore not primarily a question of rationalising but of conjecture. Thomas More argued that "for a foundation men must needs begin with faith".

Boothroyd (1978) suggests that Popper's theory

"contains much thathappens to be immediately accessible to a surprisingly varied group of people in fields as diverse as art and astronomy, who welcome the ideas as articulating and resolving some of the central problems of describing progress in their own fields, and who declare that their capacity for theorising has been enhanced." (p22)

However, Boothroyd notes an incompleteness in Popper's approach, such that

"there is, however, a group of problems about purpose, choice, conflict, and ideas of what constitutes good or best, for which I have found much that challenged me but nothing that finally satisfied me. It is for those problems, and for a number of other purposes, that I introduced 'proposal' as another key notion to stand alongside 'theory' as a pair of ideas which when used together provide discriminating power in some quite new directions." (p23)

Boothroyd finds for himself an operational inadequacy in Popper's theory: an incompleteness evidenced by an inability to cope with a particular group of problems. He attempts to fill the gap, or what he assumes to be a gap, in the theory by introducing this notion of 'proposal'.

The underlying characteristic of Boothroyd's difficulties in applying Popper to the problems of choice, purpose, and conflict is that these are the problems of living rather than understanding. Kierkegaard put his finger on the problem when he commented

"Life must be lived forwards but it can only be understood backwards."

Popper's (1974) intention was to provide lines of 'demarcation' between the sciences and pseudo-sciences: an issue of understanding.

The problems of the practitioner involve not only understanding what has gone before, and the validity of that understanding (an ability to 'test' the knowledge in some way), but also to 'live forwards'. Faith is a means by

which we may live forwards. Boothroyd's notion of 'proposal' is that of a 'statement of faith'.

Consider the following excerpt from Magee's (1982) book about Popper:

"From each of our successive formulations, consequences would be derived which went beyond the existing evidence: our theory, whether true or false, would tell us more about the world than we yet knew. And one of the ways in which we tested it would be by devising confrontations between its consequences and new observable experience; and if we discovered that some of the things it told us were not the case this would be a new discovery: it would add to our knowledge and it would start all over again the search for a better theory.

"This, in a nutshell, is Popper's view of the way knowledge advances." (p25)

In contrast to Popper, Kelly (1963) is more concerned with the mode of handling information about the world than with the actual content of the information. Their compatibility lies in the fact that both have an implicit recognition of the significance of the other's focus of attention. For Popper, the subjectivity of the process that leads to the advance of knowledge underpins the conjectural status of that knowledge. For Kelly, the fascination is in anticipating the future state of that which is to be known.

With Kelly the emphasis is upon a 'cognitive framework' rather than a 'scientific' or 'objective framework'. The combination provides a picture of the subjective actor, facing the problems of living forwards, attempting to

"predict and control" (Kelly 1955), making choices and decisions in an intelligent, cognisant manner, drawing upon a body of subjective and intersubjective knowledge the validity of which has been tested to a greater or lesser extent.

At the core of his psychology, Kelly suggests that

"man looks at his world through transparent patterns or templets which he creates and then attempts to fit over the realities of which the world is composed." (p8)

He goes on to suggest that we

"give the name constructs to these patterns that are tentatively tried on for size." (p9)

Kelly realised that consideration must be made of "the kinetic nature of the substance with which we are dealing". He goes on to state that "for our purposes the person is not an object which is temporarily in a moving state but is himself a form of motion".(p47/8)

The emerging paradigms suggest that there is something in all of this that is worth exploring. The difficulty is in knowing quite how to explore.

Scientific Method and the Practice of Faith

The practice of research can in itself form a case study of the practice of faith. Einstein (1954) recognised this when he commented

"The interpretation of religion, as advanced here, implies a dependence of science on the religious attitude, a relation which, in our predominantly materialistic age, is only too easily overlooked. While it is true that scientific results are

entirely independent from religious or moral considerations, those individuals to whom we owe the great creative achievements of science were all of them imbued with the truly religious conviction that this universe of ours is something perfect and susceptible to the rational striving for knowledge. If this conviction had not been a strongly emotional one and if those searching for knowledge had not been inspired by Spinoza's Amor Dei Intellectualis, they would hardly have been capable of that untiring devotion which alone enables man to attain his greatest achievements." (p60)

Another similar insight into the importance of faith was expressed by James (1904):

"Is it not sheer dogmatic folly to say that our inner interests can have no real connection with the forces that the hidden world may contain? In other cases divinations based on inner interests have proved prophetic enough. Take science itself! Without an imperious demand on our part for ideal logical and mathematical harmonies, we should never have attained to proving that such harmonies lie hidden between all the chinks and interstices of the crude natural world. Hardly a law has been established in science, hardly a fact ascertained, which was not first sought after, often with sweat and blood, to gratify an inner need." (p55)

Pfeffer (1982) recognises the possibility that faith can creep into the social sciences:

"Theories that rely on unobservable variables lodged in

individuals minds and with strong ideological overtones may be as much religion as social science. Indeed March (1976) explicitly uses the metaphor of religion in describing models of individual rational choice." (p122)

It will be suggested later that Pfeffer is against this practice arguing that a sharp distinction should be made between science and religion. Indeed, this process of 'demarcation' was Popper's (1974) espoused aim in his philosophy. However, such a distinction between situations where faith is practiced and where it is not is more difficult to control than one might expect. Popper himself argues that the scientist should not let go of his theories easily, which is merely another way of saying "practice faith in your theories". Kuhn (1970) suggests that historians are finding

"growing difficulties in distinguishing the "scientific" component of past observation and belief from what their predecessors readily labelled "error" and "superstition". The more carefully they study, say, Aristotelian dynamics, phlogistic chemistry, or caloric thermodynamics, the more certain they feel that those once current views of nature were, as a whole, neither less scientific nor more the product of human idiosyncrasy than those current today." (p2)

Faith is often practiced against established norms which tends to single out the believer as "different". Rosenhead (1978) expressed one type of experience of this difference in his reference to 'the fanatic':

"We may secretly envy the fanatic her or his certainty, but most of us prefer to keep our options open." (p105)

A fanatic is defined in the Pocket Oxford as someone "filled with mistaken enthusiasm". There is a tendency to pronounce the believer as someone who is "obviously wrong" because of their certainty. The undertones in Rosenhead's comment that suggest that "fanaticism" is unscientific. However, in terms of Bacon's acute methodological dictum (Kuhn 1970), the practice of faith is preferable to 'keeping options open':

"Truth emerges more readily from error than from confusion." (p18)

The underlying philosophical thrust in our culture is strongly influenced by the various forms of positivism (Smithin 1983). James (1904) challenges this positivist philosophy in its approach to practice:

"Our science is a drop, our ignorance a sea... Agnostic positivism, of course, admits this principle theoretically in the most cordial terms, but insists that we must not turn it to any practical use... [positivism argues] we must always wait for sensible evidence for our beliefs, and where such evidence is inaccessible, we must frame no hypotheses whatever." (p54)

There are many situations in which uncertainty can prevail. As a result of limited understanding, of bounded rationality (Simon 1982), such uncertainty is common, as evidenced in Rosenhead's observation. Faith, however, is an experience of certainty. Consequently, in a situation in which a truth cannot be known by means of reason, it may be 'known' by means of faith. Uncertainty and doubt paralyses decision, faith releases the decision maker into action.

The basis of the methodology used in this research has been that the research itself constitutes an example of the practice of faith. I have

believed in the importance of what I have attempted to unravel. In asking the question, "What is faith?", like Gauss I have had my solutions for a long time but I have not known how to arrive at them.

A Social Theory

The argument here will attempt to keep strictly to an analysis of the practice of faith, but it should not be forgotten that such practice is immersed in the complexity of organizational and social life. Concentrating upon the often observable phenomena of practice will bring a clarity to this analysis that is not entirely representative of actual events and experiences. An appreciation of process will therefore provide the necessary context for this analysis of practice, of

"...how action and interaction unfold in organizations over time, how meaning and interpretations are constructed around such events... emphasizing reciprocal causation and multiple determination of outcomes." (Pfeffer 1982) (p209)

The argument draws upon the two approaches within the social constructionist school, firstly, the interactionist perspective, comprising both the symbolic interactionists (Mangham 1978, Blumer 1969) and ethnomethodologists (Cicourel 1964, 1974, Garfinkel 1967); and secondly, the structuralist perspective (Berger and Luckman 1966, Goffman 1961, 1974). The importance of the relativism in the emergence of individual action and in situational definition expressed by the symbolic interactionist is recognised, whilst the influence of shared understandings and social definitions of structuralism is deemed important in moderating that relativism. As Weick argues, Social Constructionism does not lead to an 'absolute relativism':

"The objects of thought in organizations can be constructions of

organizational members... But... somewhere in most of these constructions is a grain of truth. The seeds for those constructions exist independent of the observers even though members embellish and elaborate those grains with vigour and originality... Enactment isn't a hallucination. Typically it meets the environment half way." (p44)

The subjective worlds and understandings of organizational actors require an accommodation of approach to functional relativism, but the accessibility of a tangible objective reality demands that this accommodation does not go too far. This is as true of organizational theory as it is of everyday social interaction. The difficulty facing the theorist is not the problem of appreciating either the subjective realities or an objective reality, but of comprehending and working at the interface between the two: that is, what happens to the individual and to the environment when subjective reality moves to act and respond in the objective world?

The practice of faith operates in this environ, dependent for 'success', on the one hand, on having at its heart a kernel or 'grain of truth'; whilst on the other hand, serving to influence the environment, and indeed the 'engaged' subjective realities, by enacting its own truth, functioning as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Although theoretically separable into the importance of the content of practiced faith and the process of practiced faith, practically this distinction is not as readily determined by study or research of events.

Expressing an opinion that is contrary to the approach taken in this study, Pfeffer (1982) argues for a development of organizational theory that will

"obviate the need to assume what needs to be studied (for example, the motivation and basis of action) and, furthermore, by focusing explanation on the concrete and more material and objective aspects of social reality, develop theories of behaviour that were at once more comprehensible and empirically falsifiable...

"Organizational demography, network analysis, and the analysis of physical settings and space in organizations... hold promise for advancing our understanding of organizations. This promise is largely unfulfilled because for the most part we have, indeed, conceived of organizations as bodies of thought thought by thinking thinkers (Weick, 1979a). What I hope the reader has grasped from our review of the approaches that emanate from such a perspective is how difficult that approach is to operationalise in a way that leads to falsifiable, parsimonious, and readily comprehensible explanations for behaviour.

"It may fit some cognitive biases we share, but it has yet to demonstrate the ability to advance organizational analysis efficiently or effectively. The current state of the field provides evidence of this problem." (p256)

As an argument for an approach to "understanding backwards" organizational activity, Pfeffer's arguments are strong. However, this thesis is concerned with that part of organizational analysis that is "living forwards". Not only learning from successes of the past, in terms of better systems, but learning about forms of action and about man as a "form of motion" (Kelly 1963).

Pfeffer's stance is similar to Skinner's (1938, 1953) behaviourist approach, arguing not that cognitive psychology is wrong in its treatment of experience, but that it is unlikely to provide data and theories of a sufficiently "scientific" kind.

However, as I have argued, the practice of science is a practice of faith. Consequently, I favour the opinion of McHugh (1968) who believes that Pfeffer and Skinner are wrong in their suggestion that such these processes are unobservable:

"... the activity of defining the situation is an observable and hence methodologically necessary display of the various abstractions that generally pass for the workings of society."

The difficulty and complexity of what is happening "objectively" should make us wary, but not averse to exploring.

Research Data

In the situations that are described in this research account, many of the decisions taken by the actors could not be approached as merely rational assessments of alternative options, because the resultant actions would influence the lives of the decision maker and their families in a profound manner, involving a great deal of personal sacrifice, difficult trials, pain, conflict and isolation from others who do not believe or understand. This analysis of the practice of faith is therefore concerned not so much with aspects of decision making (Cumberlidge 1983) as with the lives of the people involved and their way of living.

Like most new businesses, engaged in the development of these organizations

and their activities, the individuals face decisions and actions that require more than a routine application of set procedures. There is a requirement for creativity and innovation, for risk-taking and acting out of extreme ignorance. Severe financial constraints upon such new organizations necessitate acting in certain ways even where better, but more expensive, alternatives exist. Time to think and to plan are set against the need to do even the most mundane tasks, such as washing up the coffee cups.

On top of this, however, practising faith often involves the difficulties of coping with being thought a "freak" or "fanatic" (Rosenhead, 1978) because you believe in a way of living that not many others believe; of working with little support or even understanding from those around you; of wondering if you really are being a complete idiot and that you have wasted the last four years on a fantasy.

Research Methodology

The analysis contained in this paper is a longitudinal study of people and events. A history is of value in gaining a picture of the developing situation and character of the actors, and their ability to perform acts of faith at particular points in time.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

The researcher will often develop close relationships with the other actors involved in a situation under study. In many research programmes this arises as a result of the research involvement. In this study I had been friends with John and Pat for a number of years already. This has influenced the methodology considerably.

An important starting point for the consideration of methodology in this study is a recognition of the nature of this relationship. In some ways this relationship has made the research process more difficult. In other respects it has meant that the research has achieved what it would not otherwise have achieved. These aspects will be discussed throughout this chapter.

The Research Process

The research process involved a great deal of change, not always comfortable, in fundamental areas of my life: in my philosophy, my understanding and in my actions. In this light it has been "heuristic research", which Moustakas (1967) refers to as

"a research approach which encourages an individual to discover,
and methods which enable him to investigate further by himself."
(p207)

The friendship that formed the basis of my relationship with John and Pat led to an "identification" (Kelman 1961) with their faith, and an attitude of persisting tolerance in situations where, but for the depth of our friendship, I would have taken a more distant and "objective" approach to

the situation. On top of this, the similarity between their faith and my own led to a programme of research that was as much a reflection of my own activities as it was an attempt to study theirs. Indeed, at times the possibility was that this study would reflect this self development even more than it has. However, for reasons that I do not entirely understand, the intensity of such a study seemed too great to perform as part of a doctoral thesis: the risk involved in submitting for examination seemed high enough without marrying it with the risk of exposing myself to public scrutiny. In order to keep the risk at a level that I could cope with, I chose to hide behind the role of "researcher". This has, to some extent, weakened the research but has satisfied the pragmatics of making it possible to present for examination.

In his study of "Loneliness" Moustakas describes his experience of the research process. This has formed a helpful framework for me to reflect upon my own research, although the sequence of stages is different. The research began with "an expanding awareness through being open" to the practice of faith, "through conversation, dialogue, and discussion" with John and Pat, and with others who also professed a faith, but mostly from 'getting involved'. I had my own faith that led me to become involved, and working alongside John and Pat I found myself in situations where I had either to practice faith, believe in what I was doing despite the evidence, or pack it all in. This is the old craft methodology of "apprenticeship". It is a significant part of the methodology of this study.

The notion of studying "faith" emerged quite late on in my involvement working closely with them, some eight months into the project. Certain events brought the concept of faith to my attention and some of the problems

that I was experiencing seemed to be addressed. This emergence came as the product of a natural process of "dialectic research" in which I experienced a tension between my world of organizational theory in Bath and my world of organizational practice in Plymouth. One of the problems was that we did not seem to be an organization: we were people, and relatively disorganized people at that.

I experienced a growing difficulty in equating the life that John and Pat were living with the way that I understood was "best". However, what did "best" mean? They were doing what they believed they should be doing. My problem was magnified by the tension that I felt trying to use the experience of working with John and Pat as field research for a study in the "relationship between qualitative and quantitative data in decision making", my original research focus. John and Pat just did not seem to fit any of the theories with which I was familiar, and they did not seem particularly interested in either quantitative or qualitative data.

Moustakas refers to this stage as "a crisis which created a question or problem", and it was the importance of this problem to me personally that motivated me to pursue a resolution. The crisis that Moustakas faced involved the decision to allow his daughter to undergo major heart surgery. The crisis that faced me concerned my faith in God and the manner in which I was choosing to develop a career: as an academic. John and Pat were influential in developing and supporting my faith in God. Unable to equate John and Pat with the academic side of my life, I faced a crisis of confidence: which world was more trustworthy? I believed in them both, but they appeared to contradict one another. The reasons behind this are explored further later in this chapter. The important point for the present

argument is that here was a contradiction that, as I kept it alive and did not choose either way, provided a "powerful dialectic" that gave direction to my research.

This developed into what Moustakas terms "a search of self". In the work that we were doing in Plymouth the Christian faith that we held seemed to be the primary motivation for what we were doing. Like Moustakas, from this "emerged a recognition of the significance" of faith, both in its creative potential and in the intensity of the experience that it promoted.

This led to "steeping myself in the deeper regions" of faith; being prepared to accept the anxiety and confusion that it caused me, and attempting to meet the challenges that it made to the way that I lived and thought. It became almost an obsession, occupying my mind in the early hours of the morning and late at night. It was a drug, and the more I delved deeper the more I needed to discover what it was all about. I can say with Moustakas that "it became an ingredient of my being, the centre of my world".

As I attempted to unravel the confusion, (or construct the problem, I am not sure which is the more appropriate term) I began to experience "an intuitive grasping of the patterns" of faith, "of related aspects and different associations". I seemed to gain an understanding that enabled me to equate the two worlds. However, unlike Moustakas I did not find that this led swiftly to "an integrated vision and awareness". I found that the following stage was one of confusion and intellectual paralysis. The understanding that I gathered became less useful than the intuitions had initially felt, and I found that I did not understand where I was going or what it could achieve. The result was that I made little progress for six months, during

the latter part of 1985, early 1986.

Some excerpts from my research diary of that time shed some light on this matter, a matter of considerable importance in the understanding of the practice of faith.

"20th January 1986

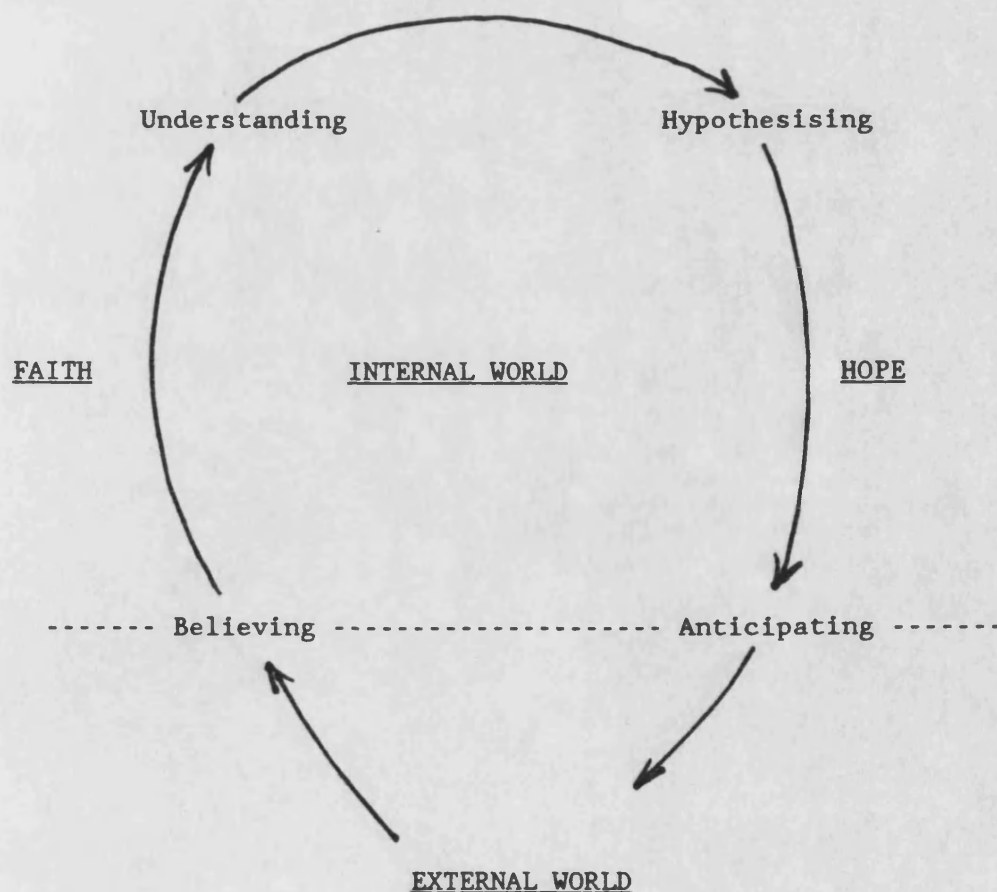
I have been recently made aware on a number of occasions of the extent to which I favour a 'systems' approach to the understanding of issues. I have only become aware of this as I have come face to face with the problem of actually determining ACTION in the situations in which I am involved. For example, it is all very well thinking up interesting interpretations of how we think and make decisions, but how do you actually help the process? How am I going to help John and Pat in their work in Plymouth? How is my modelling actually going to be used in the consulting field?...

"The academic is so often arrogantly sure that knowledge of whatever variety is a sufficient end in itself. This may well be the case from certain perspectives - I have no desire to argue with that. However, the point that is significant is that this is so often an insidious trap taking the unsuspecting academic, or indeed any specialist, off into an ivory tower. The fact that the specialist is then able to interpret the events of the world in the light of his interpretive system merely serves to enhance the view that this system has intrinsic meaning and worth because it satisfies the criteria for success that stimulated the process of reflective thought: the questioning "Why does that happen?". When an answer is obtained, the problem

is solved.

"If we are action oriented then we are attempting to provide the answer to the problem that is actually being addressed, rather than attempting to make a statement of absolute truth."

I think that I was referring to myself when I talked about "the academic"! However, this recognition of the importance of an "action perspective" rather than a "systems perspective" was, in hindsight, I believe a significant step in breaking through the difficulties that I was having. However, recognising this in my mind was not the same as "knowing what to do". At the time I was attempting to build on my previous "intuitive grasping of the patterns" of faith. Over the previous year I had derived a model for the practice of faith:



This model focused on the interrelationship between the processes of "Faith" and of "Hope". The detail of these conceptions is not of relevance to this thesis apart from the extent to which their nature illustrates the type of research product that may derive from a "systems" view of the world. The fact that my appreciation of an "action perspective" had not progressed very far is illustrated by a later entry to the diary that picks up on the same topic:

"21st Feb 1986

The times that I have attempted to introduce the 'larger' concepts of 'Faith' and 'Hope' to John and Pat (See for example the end of Tape "Early Recollections" Jan 86) I have been frustrated by their apparent inability to grasp what I was getting at. However, a more action oriented perspective on my part might begin to explain why this is so.

"John and Pat are not interested in theorising about why they do things, but about actually 'doing them'. Thus the notions of faith and hope are in fact implicit as driving factors; the MEANING of situations, for them, being very much 'situation or event oriented'. The fact may be that in those events they are driven and guided by the particular faiths or hopes that they have concerning the things involved, but these are INSTRUMENTAL rather than of significance themselves..."

The diary goes on to address these "facts" that are only instrumental to John and Pat: although aware again of the applicability of an action perspective, I was still keen to determine an understanding of the "facts".

A third event is recorded in the diary:

"26th April 1986

"... whilst working late at the office, Colin Eden came in to my office and we started to chat about different parts of the work. In particular we talked about some of the issues arising from a recent 'Planning Exercise' that we had carried out amongst the seven of us that now constitute the Strategic Decision Support Research Unit (SDSRU).

"I do not really remember the detailed content of what we were discussing, but I remember that we talked about the way that the sessions were guided by the use of cognitive maps and the whole approach that Colin uses in his work. I also remember giving my interpretation of what was going on in the terms of the Faith/Hope model. Most of all, out of this discussion I remember suddenly realising that an Action Perspective is NOT merely a particular type of systems approach but something qualitatively different. At the time I would have been unable to communicate what the fundamental difference is, but there was something as a result of that conversation that suddenly 'clicked into place'.

This thesis is a record of a research process that has become progressively more action-oriented and less rooted in a systems view of the world and has culminated in the use of a largely phenomenological approach to the study.

In terms of research process, this beginning of a transition towards adopting an action frame led to a changing perception of the nature of faith, and to a different intuitive process producing an alternative understanding of the process of faith. However, this time the process of "an

intuitive grasping of the patterns" of faith has led to the emergence of "an integrated vision and awareness".

I believe that this development has been one of the most significant personal outcomes from this research project, embodying a fundamental change in my philosophy of understanding and practice. It was this change that has required the larger part of my effort. The implications have been wide ranging, requiring a gradual restructuring of many aspects of my thinking.

This process is far from complete, and to an extent this thesis reflects that fact: I have been unable to completely restructure my approach to thinking and action. As a result this thesis follows a relatively traditional path. However, I am in sympathy with much of the work of Reason and Rowan (1981) who have provided a useful sourcebook for me to test and develop my own thinking. As Reason confesses in his study of "The Dialectics of Two-Person Relationships",

"The research described in this chapter does not go as far as it might in this direction..." (p331)

The same is true of this thesis.

Research As Discovery

The preceding section discussed the stages that constituted the research process in this study of faith. This section also looks at the process of research and my experience of it, but focuses upon the mechanism of discovery that was important at different stages throughout the period of study.

Kuhn (1970) argues that in any attempt to bring illumination to a subject:

"... discovering a new sort of phenomenon is necessarily a complex event, one which involves recognizing both that something is and what it is." (p55)

To the extent that faith has received little attention in the field of psychology (Cooper and McGaugh 1966, Dunlap 1946) and particularly social psychology, this research process has been one of "discovering a new sort of phenomenon". This is not to suggest that faith is a new phenomenon; Kuhn argues that the discovery of oxygen only a few centuries ago was such an event, but that is not to say that oxygen was not available and operational before that time.

More importantly, as far as an understanding of this research process is concerned, the discoveries of this period were new for me. As such I believe that many of the propositions of this thesis will be novel, or at least throw a different light upon the events, for others.

The research process took this form: the growing inner conviction 'that' faith was important always preceding and encouraging the process of discovering 'what' faith is. Methodologically this process is significant in that the 'gut feeling' was in many ways a very physical sensation rather than an explicitly cognitive or rational thing. Einstein (1954) seems to have experienced similar processes in the early creative stages of his thought:

"The words or the language, as they are written or spoken, do not seem to play any role in my mechanism of thought. The psychical entities which seem to serve as elements in thought are certain signs and more or less clear images which can be

'voluntarily' reproduced and combined.

"There is of course a certain connection between those elements and relevant logical concepts. It is also clear that the desire to arrive finally at logically connected concepts is the emotional basis of this rather vague play with the above mentioned elements. But taken from a psychological viewpoint, this combinatory play seems to be the essential feature in productive thought - before there is any connection with logical construction in words or other kinds of signs which can be communicated to others.

"The above mentioned elements are, in my case, of visual and some of muscular type. Conventional words or other signs have to be sought for laboriously only in a secondary stage, when the mentioned associative play is sufficiently established and can be reproduced at will." (p35/6)

This initial growing realisation, or belief, 'that' faith was a particular phenomenon worthy of attention preceded the ability to explain 'what' it was by a considerable margin. Further, the process of explication, in developing a communicable construct system, involved and involves a seeming series of trial and error attempts that sometimes fail and sometimes to a degree succeed to capture the 'essence' of what was 'felt' about the phenomenon 'that' was recognised. However, the continuing process of "trying constructs on for size" as "templates" (Kelly 1963), over the sensed reality 'that' faith seemed to be, is a developing process: the match between the explication of 'what' grows to 'fit' more closely with 'that' which was believed in at the start.

In terms of research practice this has proven at times an extremely difficult process to cope with, a tension being set up between the richness of the phenomenon and the paucity^{of} what can be demonstrated and so experienced. The belief 'that' faith was a distinct and important phenomenon encouraged the process of search and discovery for the 'what'; similarly, the successes of discovery, including developing an ability to convincingly argue from a consistent and relevant developed construct system (Smithin, 1983), served to reinforce and maintain the belief 'that' it was so. Many periods of doubt had to be weathered, uncomfortably, when the 'tension' between the two loosened. Periods when trial and error led time and time again to error, failing to be convincing to others and failing, too, to convince myself. At such times a frequent coping mechanism would be withdrawal: occupying available time with other 'important' and often unimportant activities. This justified having insufficient time to address the problem of whether the belief that was held 'that' the phenomenon was real and important (of 'value') did indeed match with anything more tangible. However, as I argued above concerning the fundamental philosophical change from systems to action perspective, I gradually discovered that "what is important is not to avoid it, but to get into it in the right way." (Reason and Rowan 1981).

This tension, or dialectic, between the belief 'that' and the explication of 'what' was both a necessary and important aspect of this as creative research. Methodologically this is an important, and in many ways counter-intuitive, process. Reason and Rowan (1981) argue that

"At the 'making sense' phase of research, instead of trying to 'kill' our data by setting out a list of hypotheses and shooting down each one with a 'yes' or 'no' - as if that were what human

inquiry were all about - we try instead to 'keep our data alive' by allowing the contradictions to emerge, and by exploring the ways the opposites are interdependent, how they interpenetrate, and how they are also a unity." (p132)

Keeping contradictions alive makes it very difficult to determine "testable hypotheses" as Popper would require of a methodology. Similarly, without straightforward hypotheses to test but merely a set of contradictions to cope with, I found it exceedingly difficult to adopt a "method" and to keep to it. Indeed, the pain of the process often meant that I developed no rationale at all, merely adopting the most basic method of "keeping going", in terms of keeping contact with the actors at the research site and recording events. It is in this context that the following discussion of method must be considered.

Method

Having presented a philosophical discussion of the way in which methodology has been important in this research process, it is appropriate to go on to discuss some of the more practical aspects of "method".

My approach to the philosophy of research has been personal, even "idiosyncratic". This has not been a conscious decision, nor the product of bad organization that some of the "haphazardness" might imply. It has been the result of the natural process of following the only path apparent to me that would enable me to maintain my integrity whilst continuing to pursue the research. The same applies to my approach to method. This is a reflection of the underlying philosophy, although the philosophy in the same way is a reflection of the research method that has evolved.

"Method" can be defined as a "procedure; way of doing anything, especially according to a regular plan; systematic or orderly arrangement" (Oxford Illustrated Dictionary). As such it is a misleading term in this context. It suggests far more rigour than I could justifiably attribute to the process that has formed this research process. Furthermore, I would not wish to have imposed such stricture upon a necessarily dynamic series of social events.

The most rigorous element of "method" may be considered a "retrospective" phenomenon that is research analysis. On the other hand, the "method" employed in field research practice was merely a body of simple heuristics, or mini-theories, often only loosely connected with respect to field research practice. As intimated above, sometimes these heuristics were little more than "coping mechanisms", serving to maintain the research relationship.

For example, in the latter stages of the period under study in this thesis I had episodes of marked disagreement with John and Pat on issues that were important to both of us. My method of continuing the field research was the same as for continuing my relationship with them: to "keep my mouth shut". In truth, I think that this is a widely used research heuristic over certain minor issues, but, if one is to accept most research accounts at face value, the research is generally able to carry on alongside. In this case, the field research was essentially minimal as a result: attendance of official meetings and occasional phone calls.

Allowing contradiction to remain as an aspect of research approach must necessitate this sort of behaviour at times. It is a difficult thing for the

researcher to cope with; but even more difficult for the actors who are not trained nor aware to the same extent of the processes involved.

More rigour is applied to the field research data in analysis: this is a process of post-rationalization of events and activities. As a retrospective act, "method" is a framework that is placed upon the events that occurred. This gives an understanding of the situation. Allison's (1971) analysis of the Cuban missile crisis provides a good example of this process. The outcome of this form of activity is a set of theories, or heuristics, that may be taken into successive research situations.

Method of Research Practice

I was tempted to title this section "The Fight" because of a desire to describe what it has felt like, rather than to rationalise the process. However, academic sensibility just prevailed.

In retrospect, I believe that the single most important aspect of the "methodology" that I employed in this research was to allow ambiguity to persist in my own mind, rather than to impose a framework of understanding in order to interpret events at too early a stage. The research began as classic "participant observation" (Spradley 1980, Polsky 1969, Bruyn 1966, Junker 1960) in the summer of 1984 as I took up the role of "Administrator" for the work that John and Pat were developing. They were fully aware of my intention to use my involvement as an opportunity to "do research". At the time I do not think that they were too sure what this would entail, but neither was I. Fortunately they were interested in the prospect rather than wary. On a number of occasions they even tried to encourage me when I was finding the process of research difficult, and on more than one occasion we

discussed together ways that I could make it easier for myself; for example, scheduling "research time" at a regular time each week that would be recognised as such by all, or providing me with an office to work in, even arranging times when we would all discuss "research questions/issues".

As time went on I buried myself in the work of "The Spring", keeping a diary of events but overall finding the effort to further my thinking on the research a near impossible task. In simple terms, I didn't have a clue what to do. Everything that was happening, the way that John and Pat were working, just did not fit with any academic framework that I could apply, certainly not with any conviction or interest. The world of academia and research seemed a million miles from John and Pat's chaotic, exciting world of daring plans and "hearing from God". The latter seemed almost "silly" or "deluded" when seen from the world of understanding and intellectual rigour. In Plymouth, intelligence could be a hindrance from seeing things as they were: as Poggi (1965) is so often quoted "A way of seeing is also a way of not seeing".

Every trip up to Bath to discuss research progress was stimulating, like a breath of vital air, to my studies. With fresh ideas I would return, only to find myself struggling again after a few short weeks.

I was battling to "understand", to "pin things down" and control them; to be able to say, "This is what is important, this is the way to improve, this is the way ahead". But however much I was encouraged by Colin not to worry, to let it run its course, I found myself struggling at least for a handhold: something that would unite the two worlds. Just like the film, "The Wizard of Oz", I had found a route between the "black and white" world (or so it

seemed then) of academia, and the colourful, fantastic otherworldly "Oz" in Plymouth.

In Bath I worked in the way that had helped me on my undergraduate degree: succeeding by hard work and application, drawing upon and developing the ability to understand. In Plymouth I was challenged to "Let God provide", to "Live by faith", not to worry about an absence of income, to expect miracles to "happen". Each world competed for my attention and commitment, and it seemed that it was impossible to have both. At times I felt like an adulterer: I experienced the pains of disloyalty to both.

The beginning of 1985 brought some hope when I wrote a short essay entitled "Pattern", based on Kelly's (1963) Psychology of Personal Constructs. The basis of my argument concerned the practice of understanding the world by means of "templates" of understanding, called "constructs", that would be "fitted over" the world as experienced, giving an interpretation and thereby understanding. Although very crude in execution and not really very profound, it gave me the handle that I needed to begin to draw the two worlds together: John and Pat's activities could be understood as "having meaning to them". The ambiguity still existed, but I had found a way, for the moment, of coping with both side by side.

I was like the Rabbi in Rokeach's (1968) story. The Rabbi is visited by a married couple who have had a disagreement and they wish the Rabbi to sort it out. The Rabbi talks first with the husband, and after listening to his side of the story the Rabbi says, "You are right!". The Rabbi then listen to the wife and when she is finished the Rabbi tells her also, "You are right!". The married couple leave, each of them happy that the Rabbi has

agreed with their point of view. However, the Rabbi's wife has been listening behind a door, and when the couple have gone she comes in to the Rabbi and says, "How can you give them such advice? They can't both be right!". The Rabbi quietly pondered what his wife had said, and then he replied, "You are right!".

The problem for me was, like the Rabbi's couple, "they couldn't both be right". However, for the moment I had found a way of appeasing the two worlds, making it possible for me to live in both.

I continued to exist as an actor in both "plays", I think with a degree of success in each. However, I was a different character in each play. In Bath, the young researcher, reading books, developing my love for philosophical abstractions and models that bore tenuous relation to reality. Colin would often say to me, "You've got to get underneath the data", but that involved playing a different role. I had only just discovered a role that was tenable, and the scene for the play was an Ivory Tower.

In Plymouth I was the budding "man of faith", disciplined by John and Pat, encouraged to expect miraculous things of God. I could dare to do this because this "way of seeing" that John and Pat used seemed to work. They said to me, "We respect your opinion - have confidence in your own viewpoint". But my role as disciple did not allow me this liberty. My view, the view that I had "out of role", was as confused as Hamlet's. "To be or not to be?" became for me, "To believe or not to believe?" That was the question.

My understanding, my philosophy told me not to believe. It told me not to be

deceived or drawn in by this "pie-in-the-sky" world of miracles and signs from God. My feelings, however, went mostly with John and Pat: these friends who were risking everything, whom I doubted, but yet who excited me, whose daring exploits challenged me to believe. Could this really be right? If they were right, then this was the sort of life that I would want to live: exciting, different, original, adventurous. I hardly dared believe, and yet I could not risk losing this opportunity, should it, by chance or design, prove to be true after all.

And so, there I stayed, straddling two worlds; a role in both yet belonging completely to neither.

As I have said above, I believe this position, on the verge of schizophrenia, was the single most important aspect of my research practice. At times it was almost unbearable and I thought that I would give up, that I could continue in such confusion and pain no longer. And yet that was never truly an option. I cannot think of a time when that really became a possibility for the simple reason that I had nothing better to go to. This confused mixture of two incompatible worlds, albeit tortuous and the source of much pain at times, embodied everything that was most important to me: my developing career in academia and my growing faith in God. To have chosen either would have meant too great a loss, and to have chosen neither (perhaps a job in industry) held no appeal at all. To have gone into industry would have been the equivalent of purgatory for me, if purgatory is a dull, grey "nothingy" world where you feel no pain, excitement or love, a world characterised by its lack of colour and the absence of anything remarkable. A mere existence (Lewis 1952). To me the only choice was to risk "heaven" even if it meant experiencing some of the fires of hell.

Herein lies the second most important aspect of my research practice: the outcome was important to me. I cared, a lot. The risk was possible only because I believed that "in the end" it would be worth it to find a way to join the two worlds. To find that they were not contradictory, merely that I had not understood them sufficiently.

The third and complementary aspect was that I believed that I could join the two worlds, at least in my own mind. I believed that one day I would know what was right and what was wrong in both worlds. In this thesis I am convinced that I have succeeded in doing that. Not perfectly by any means, but to a sufficient extent that allows me to feel the ground steady beneath my feet, without the dialectic tension pulling me first one way and then the other.

Interestingly the source of the belief that I would reach my goal came from John and Pat's world: an experience that I had while I was in Plymouth. In the February of 1985 I was thinking about my return to Bath in May, when I would have completed ten months work with John and Pat. My concern was what the focus of my research would be. Building on the ideas from the paper mentioned earlier, "Pattern", I had become interested in the way that John and Pat understood their world. They had always described it as "living by faith". This made me ask the question, "Well, what is faith?". As I was thinking about this as a possible line of action I "heard from God". One lunchtime in late February I was in the house on my own. It was a beautiful day and I decided to take a walk through the woods at the back of the house. I picked up my pocket Bible, put on my coat and wandered out. A little way into the woods, I sat on an old tree stump and facing the sun, which was quite warm for that time of year, opened my Bible. I was reading the Letter

to the Hebrews at the time, a book in the New Testament that I had not read before. I turned to my book marker at chapter 9, and as I began to read I heard a voice, almost audible but it was clearly inside my head. The voice said, briefly and only once, "When you turn over the page I'm going to teach you something about faith". I remember being thrown into a state of quiet excitement (I am not one to jump around) that had elements of ridiculous hilarity: it all seemed silly so I wanted to laugh, but it also seemed terribly important if it was actually true. I contained myself and forced myself to read every word in chapter 9, and then on into chapter 10. I came to the end of the page and, with my heart almost in my mouth, I turned the page.

There it was. A few lines down, the beginning of chapter 11, entitled "By Faith". I have since discovered that verse one of chapter 11 is the only attempt at a definition of faith in the Bible. It reads,

"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."

At the time I was dumbstruck. This was amazing, it was awe inspiring, it was fantastic. I read and re-read chapter 11 which talks about the importance of faith to God, and about the men of Old Testament times who were commended by God for their faith. I believed that God was saying at that time, "If you want to explore faith, if you want to try to answer the question, "What is faith?", then go ahead. I will help you." I did not hear God say this last thing as I had heard the words on the tree stump, but it was my interpretation of the events, and an interpretation that I have believed ever since.

On a number of occasions throughout the last four years when I have felt like giving up, that incident has come to mind and helped me to cope. I have thought, "No, I will do it. God would not have told me that I could do something that was too difficult for me. He's not like that. I will carry on and I will make it." And so, in those times when I was finding it difficult, I would carry on, or cope as best as I could, buoyed up by the memory of that remarkable experience.

This non-rational (rather than "irrational") event is a good example of the "experiential" and "transcendent" meaning that I argue in the body of this thesis to be potentially important sources of the motivation to practice faith. Out of the "meaning" that this event had for me arose the will to believe (James 1904) and to continue through painful ambiguity and confusion.

The Data: A Phenomenological Perspective

My methodology, then, was a struggle to hold together two different and sometimes opposing worlds, until both worlds became one. The process of merging was gradual, as little by little I came to a way of understanding in which I could believe in both worlds from the same role. For a long time I was not confident of having reached this point, but I fought for it, sporadically, in Plymouth and in Bath. I would argue for the validity of the actions of John and Pat to the people in Bath. I would argue with John and Pat about the importance of an intellectual approach. Each time I fought and did not lose, my confidence grew. Now I have convinced the final enemy, myself, and I find that I do not need to fight (as much) any more.

The important factor in this "dual world" scenario is that the only

consistent element was myself. As researcher I had greatest control over this "wandering variable", and I was able to "experiment" in both worlds to determine the relative affects upon myself. Early on in the research process I remember suggesting to Colin, "I AM the data from Plymouth". I was searching at the time for an answer to his question concerning the whereabouts of my data in yet another abstract model that I had presented to him. I think now that I was not far from the truth.

As I wandered between worlds, I carried with me the perspective from the other. At times, as I have suggested, the result of this schizophrenia was too much dissonance (Festinger 1957), and unable to make any sense at all I would adopt a more comfortable perspective befitting the current role. For example, in Plymouth the Bible was the "Authoritative Word of God". As such it carried "the highest authority", and so was generally convincing (barring disagreements over interpretation!). In Bath I began to use the Bible as a source of authoritative input to my written work. To put it mildly, Colin made it clear that this was not a very good idea. The manner in which I used the Bible in one world did not suit the other world. At the time this produced some "dissonance" and so, after a bit of a battle, I adopted an approach to writing that was more comfortable.

However, at other times I would have developed sufficient understanding to draw upon the conflict as a source of analytical tension. Taking the example above, I would be able to ask, "Why is the Bible a source of meaning in one world but not in the other?". This sort of tension, or contrast, begs resolution. Having worked incrementally on the data that I carried around inside I can now explain the difference in terms of "Transcendent Meaning", of little consequence in Bath, and "Critical Meaning", of great importance

in Bath. That is, in Plymouth, single statements were sufficiently influential if the source had credibility, and God had plenty of "street-cred". In Bath, however, the culture demanded well-developed argument so that no statement is dependent upon one source. Both views, I have finally determined for myself, are tenable in both worlds, depending upon the particular circumstances. The issue is one of "dominant world-view", in this case "Transcendent" dominant in Plymouth, "Critical" dominant in Bath.

The overall process that allowed this development to occur was one of gradual testing in both worlds: receiving support for my ideas and views in Bath, for example a fellow researcher commenting, "I have always thought that you've got something interesting and worthwhile in this faith-thing"; and finding justification for my ideas in Plymouth, for example, John Smyth's involvement as a man of considerable vision also succeeding with considerable intellectual rigour.

In short, it seemed to me that there was faith in both worlds. In one it seemed to be dominated (almost to the exclusion of all else) by "words from God" and "powerful experiences (miracles)". In the other world, such authorities and "happenings" were not taken at face value: the dominant force was critical analysis. Little by little I began to see that critical analysis was also important in Plymouth, and that authority and experience were important in Bath. The difference was one of degree of emphasis and priority.

The greater part of drawing the two worlds together involved little more than participating and listening with an open ear. Given my history in both

worlds, a long friendship with John and Pat and an undergraduate degree in Bath, I was already familiar with both. The practice of empathising was consequently easy, by and large. As time went by, I grew in appreciation of each world, taking on board the experiences and noting the power of aspects of both. With all of this data "inside", my major research practice, as I saw it, was to try to build generalised abstract models that allowed data from both worlds to be explained. Einstein (1954) called this sort of activity "associative play", and play it was.

My interest, from a research point of view, was not the data, but an explanation of why the data was as it was. I was convinced that the answer to this question, and to the problem of joining opposing worlds, was in the answer to the question "What is faith?". If only I could understand, from Bath's world-view, what was happening in Plymouth then I would have reached my goal.

And this is important: I would then be able to explain the Plymouth world as an actor in that world, in terms that were not foreign to Plymouth; not in terms that had meaning only in Bath, that imposed an alien understanding upon the events that occurred in Plymouth.

Colin recently said to me, "What do you think John and Pat would make of this?", referring to a then-current draft of my work. I replied that it would mean very little to them. Since then, I have achieved what I wanted to achieve: given the constraints that this thesis is written for an immediate "Bath" type audience (using a dominant "critical" world view), I now believe that John and Pat would find this interesting and informative.

The result of this "break-through" has been to "free-up" the data: the story now tells itself much more easily, almost longing to be dissected and explained in terms of the model that has been developed. There is an integrity between the two that does offence to neither, whilst sitting comfortably at home in Bath.

Bath and Plymouth are still different cities, it must be said, but at least they are now on the same planet.

The Data: Involvement in Plymouth

It was stated above that I was a "participant observer" when I went to work as administrator in Plymouth in the summer of 1984. Since I left in the May of 1985, this has continued with slightly less involvement up to the present day. Currently it seems that I am coming to the end of my involvement there, as in the spring of this year I expect to officially resign from the Spring Trust and from the committee of Allied Housing (Plymouth) ltd, the organizations that have had responsibility for running the residential home and John and Pat's work.

The data used in this thesis comes largely from this activity as participant observer: for a period of ten months living and working with John and Pat from July 1984 to May 1985, and for the following four years (nearly) as a member of the trust and committee. In this latter period my involvement has varied, from periods of months with little contact other than occasional conversations over the phone, to periods where I have travelled down sometimes three or four times a month. This has depended to an extent on my circumstances, but more largely on the apparent importance of events at particular times. Generally these visits would consist of spending time with

John and Pat, talking about events and developments or crises, combined with meetings of the trust and the committee.

Through consistent contact with John and Pat, and as time went by with other trustees as well, I would generally be aware of what was happening at any time with the work in Plymouth.

Another source of data has been my memory of John and Pat in past years, going back to the mid-1970s, when John and Pat were my youth club leaders in Southampton. Over a number of years we became close friends.

A final source that deserves a special mention, as it has provided a rich source of material for this process of writing up, is a set of about twenty hours of taped interviews with John and Pat. These did not involve me: an ex-journalist in Plymouth, Denise O'Leary, heard about John and Pat's adventures and approached them to write a book. She has kindly allowed me unlimited access to this material.

Method of Analysis

It has been suggested that, whilst straddling the two worlds, a primary activity was building abstract models. This thesis contains a model that has developed out of this process. It is this model that has provided the understanding for me to join the two worlds. What, however, is the status of this model? What is its purpose? (Collins 1976, Harre 1976).

Lilien (1975) argues that

"Model Relativism [is] the school of thought which holds that several or many models can be employed to describe a situation.

depending on both the user (eg technically sceptical manager versus sophisticated analyst) and the use (eg long range planning versus short range scheduling)." (p12)

I would support this view, and argue that primarily the model in this thesis has been for my use ("the user") in understanding the occurrences in Plymouth from the standpoint of a researcher from Bath ("the use").

A caution of Lilien's concerning models is that

"structure makes them difficult to understand and hence trust." (p13)

This is a problem. As yet I do not know how communicable the model is to others. I trust it, but can the reader?

Lilien goes on to distinguish different types of model: pedagogic for use in teaching, managerial for use with managers that is more complex but still understandable and acceptable to the user, and

"Theory Representative: the analyst's "best possible, state of knowledge, representation of the most vital aspects of the situation. This model is as complex as the situation demands."

(p13)

The latter is used in this thesis as the situation demands, to a greater extent, this form. However, I have worked hard to make it as straightforward as possible whilst seeking to sacrifice none of the most important content. This has become more possible as my understanding has increased.

Lilien also classifies the different types of model into four categories: conceptual, descriptive, experimental/exploratory, and prescriptive. He

suggests that

"Conceptual models are generally of more use to the model builder than the model user if user and builder are not the same person... they are more helpful in thinking about reality than in actual decision making." (p14)

This is the main form of model building that was undertaken in this study. This is not altogether inappropriate for a doctoral thesis: the emphasis of my study has been upon an attempt to challenge and thereby understand more thoroughly the relationship between management theory and the activity at the field research site in Plymouth. Drawing upon various theories and the extent to which they have illuminated my perception of the data that has been gathered, I have developed and altered models that have assisted in my "thinking about reality rather than in actual decision making".

However, the limited extent to which model building has occurred in ways other than conceptual has been a source of frustration, as it has been my desire at a number of points to assist the decision making process. It has been limited as a result of, probably, a number of factors, two of which are identified here.

Firstly, the research relationship with John and Pat never developed to the point where they became involved in the research process itself. With Reason and Rowan (1981) I believe this would have been the most appropriate and satisfying form for the research to have taken: co-research. Fundamentally I believe that this is a result of their personal disinclination towards such activity; certainly in any formal sense. Their mode of operation concerning most of the work was to "work with or consult others" rather than

to "sit down and work it out". The process of gathering information through contacts and relationship may be argued a characteristic of managerial life in a variety of business fields, and not just peculiar to John and Pat.

Further, John and Pat seemed constantly to operate under the feeling of time-pressure: there was never enough time to do what needed to be done, and the consequences of failure and ignominy were too severe to allow them to cease their concern. The practice of "crisis management", with little time to think about anything other than what is currently happening, precludes model building as an activity.

The second key factor in limiting model building is the situation described above in the "Plymouth world": a culture of practising faith and adopting an attitude of certainty concerning proposals from referent others rather than developing a body of understanding and internally consistent rational argument. Practising faith in a single proposal, the actors were not necessarily concerned with developing a model that will guide action and decision making. Their decision making was already directed by their trust in the received influence of God.

This factor was often exacerbated in Plymouth by an antagonism towards the approach of "attempting to understand", often equating it with a "lack of faith". This was, in my opinion, an error in judgement brought about by certain things that John and Pat had experienced. For example, they observed doubt concerning miracles, acts of God, and such like in a number of acquaintances who were well educated and/or professional persons. In many cases I believe that an "intellectual security" did prevent the exercise of faith, which can often involve taking a risk and giving up that security.

Therefore, alongside understanding, John and Pat often observed "lack of faith". Faith is merely adopting an attitude of certainty; understanding merely the attempt to work it out. The latter can be a source of faith at a later date, as certainty can follow from understanding.

I believe that this reticence to engage in any rigorous form of model building was a mistake. The stress that John and Pat experienced at a number of points during the course of the project could, I believe, have been alleviated, at least to an extent, by exercising their intellectual skills in a more focused way, giving them a greater understanding of some of the things that were happening around them. This would not have detracted from their faith in any way if they had not wanted it to. It may also have provided shorter routes through to desired outcomes, and aided them in their pursuit of certain valued goals by helping them to "stay on track", providing them with a clear picture of their faith. At the times when they began to wonder "What are we doing?", they would have had more support from their understanding. Even if their understanding did not support their faith, it would have provided a vehicle for discussion and reaffirmation of their faith. In many of their stressful times, the difficulty was in facing a void with seemingly little to do but wait or to occupy themselves with something else. To give credence to personal understanding allows an issue to be addressed in a constructive manner, providing predictive power which may facilitate the maintenance of an attitude of certainty.

This has been my own practice during this research project. The generation of models for my own use has provided me not only with a source of support in coping with the stresses of the research process, but also with a means of experimenting with the research results. Lilien suggests that

"Experimentation is used to explore the response and characteristics of a system... Exploration, as in heuristic programming, is a systematic, sequential way of trying out alternatives and improving actions." (p14)

These "heuristic models" have contributed to the "conceptual model" that is used in this thesis. Having been worked and used as a means of considering my own practice of faith, it has not been feasible to record their development and implications explicitly in this text. However, this process cannot be underestimated in its importance in supporting this research process.

The experimental models were tested in real situations given that they guided my actions to the extent that I trusted them. There is an element of risk in this, but, as I argued above in a slightly different context, I would tend to test my untried ideas in situations where potential difficulties, particularly for others, were limited.

My method has been to consider such models in relation to my own practice, and where appropriate develop "prescriptive models". These prescriptive models, as the term suggests, have been applied to my practice. This has helped to test the validity of the research and to lend more of an applied direction to the study than is perhaps common in an ethnomethodological or phenomenological approach.

PART TWO

THE PRACTICE OF FAITH ARISES FROM MEANING

CHAPTER 3

MEANING AND ACTION

Adopting an "action frame of reference" Silverman (1972) made the following observation concerning the relationship between meaning and action:

"Action arises out of meanings which define social reality"

(p127)

The practice of faith is an action and, following Silverman, in this chapter it is argued that this action arises out of meaning. An analytical model is described which is used throughout this thesis to explain and comment upon the data. Following Glaser and Strauss (1968) this model has been derived from the experience of research in Plymouth. In Popperian (1974) fashion, hypotheses developed from observation are used in turn to analyse the data. The validity of this model is tested in this process in terms of its explanatory and prescriptive power.

The model is concerned with the "meaning" from which faith arises. The question "What is faith?" will be addressed by considering the source of meaning from which faith arises and the form of that meaning.

Whilst the model has grown out of this research, it has been developed through building on the work of, particularly, Kelman (1961), Kiesler (1971) and Lawler, Kuleck, and Rhode (1975). Ideas on human development by Von Hugel (in Hughes 1988) were also a source of influence in determining the tripartite nature of the model. However, before describing the main pattern

of the model, two factors that are important factors in the practice of faith are discussed: language and time.

Faith and Language

Underlying this thesis is a social theory: the activity of people in relation to and in conjunction with others. In one part of the New Testament it is argued that "faith comes from hearing the word". Socially, language is important in communicating meaning from which faith may arise. The importance of language in an organizational context has been noted by some (Pfeffer 1972) and emphasised by others (Boothroyd, 1984, Eden, Jones and Sims 1979, 1983). The underlying reason for this is made clear by Kelly (1963).

In interaction with the world the individual places an interpretation upon what is construed, forming what Kelly terms "constructs". The framework of constructs that are related to each individual construct serves to provide context or "contrast", and it is from this contrast that meaning is derived.

However, Kelly emphasises that

"construing is not to be confused with verbal formulation. A person's behaviour may be based upon many interlocking equivalence-difference patterns which are never communicated in symbolic speech. Many of these preverbal or nonverbal governing constructs are embraced in the realm of physiology." (p51)

and similarly

"in studying the psychology of man the philosopher, we must take into account his subverbal patterns of representation and construction." (p16)

Characteristic of humans, above all animals, is the ability to form "verbal constructs" that will be linked to the relevant subverbal constructs, thereby contributing to the context and consequently to the meaning of each construct. For example, one may construe a house and so hold the "construct" of that house. One may also hold the "verbal construct" of "house". These constructs are separate but related.

As a result one may construe a house by seeing it. This is non-verbal and is an example of what will later be referred to as contributing to experiential meaning. However, if another has not seen the house one may communicate the construct of the house by using the verbal construct "house". To the extent that the other is familiar with the verbal construct "house" and it has meaning for that individual, the construct may be said to have been communicated.

All meaning is held by the individuals as interlocking networks of constructs. In social situations verbal constructs can be important in communicating meaning; and in the terms of the model outlined in this chapter, of importance in influencing transcendent and critical meaning. Language can therefore serve as an important influence upon the practice of faith.

Faith and Time

Faith is notable when it is persistent, even against severe opposition. Thomas More, for example, had a faith that was persistent against the threat and eventual reality of execution. Persistence is another way of saying that the practice of faith continues over time. In the model outlined in this chapter it will be noted that faith arising from critical meaning will tend

to have an intrinsic persistence, dependent upon the extent to which the individual's network of internalized beliefs has been developed. Transcendent meaning, on the other hand, will be persistent to the extent that the referent other continues to be found attractive and to the extent that the other is aware of the behaviour of the individual. Experiential meaning will endure only to the extent that it is incorporated into the critical meaning of the individual, either to the extent that it is understood (fitting with beliefs and values that are already held) or in the manner of "stories" that are told in totum such that the power of the experience, even if not entirely understood, can be experienced one again.

The implications of these characteristics are that, for faith to endure, it must either arise from critical meaning, or be sustained by a continuing relationship, or be reaffirmed in "story-telling". Given the integral nature of the practice of faith, all three will generally be characteristic.

The centrality of critical meaning, and the cognitive structure of beliefs from which that meaning derives, in providing a base of stability for the individual "living forwards" in situations of uncertainty has been noted by a number of writers (Berger and Luckman, 1966, Lyman and Scott 1970, McHugh 1968). Roth (1963) suggests that

"People will not accept uncertainty. They will make an effort to structure it no matter how poor the materials they have to work with and no matter how much the experts try to discourage them. One way to structure uncertainty is to structure the time period through which uncertain events occur." (ch5)

Glassman (1973) and others (Weick 1976, March and Olsen 1976) have developed

the notion of "loosely coupled systems", with relation to this notion of the importance of structure on stability and action. Further, there is an exciting rationale for the practice of faith that develops when considering this dimension of time.

Faith arises from a tightly coupled system of beliefs that gives critical meaning. The structure of the arguments can serve to provide confidence in the validity of the beliefs. Of necessity, commitment to faith will require loose coupling with systems that conflict with this belief (for example, contrary evidence or opinions). In the short term the practice of faith can appear unreasonable, even fallacious. However, this is the nature of creative activity, and all innovation has a tendency to "feel like a failure in the middle" (Kanter 1988). This suggests a particular methodology with respect to the practice of faith.

The method is suggested by Glassman:

"Time must be isolated as a special variable...; over the long run the influence of one subsystem on another may be stronger than it appears within any given short interval. In general this may be conceptualized as a case in which A exerts control over B indirectly through other systems which provide a systematically varying amplification factor." (p85)

The model in this chapter thus considers the factor of time in the practice of faith, with the underlying element of method that judgement of validity is deferred as long as possible with respect to the outcome of faith.

Important Direction and Power

The first elements of the model used in analysis in later chapters are drawn from a model of motivation. This model was generated by Lawler, Kuleck and Rhode (1975) building on Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory. Given that "motivation" is concerned with the "impetus to act", the relationship to meaning as defined by Silverman is clear. Three factors are identified that must be present for meaning to give rise to action: an important direction, confidence in the power of the solution to reach the desired end, and confidence in one's power to perform the necessary tasks.

There is substantial empirical support for the theoretical formulation relating expectancy with value (valence) as a source of personal motivation (Vroom 1964, Sheard 1970, Wanous 1972, Mitchell and Knudsen 1973, Sheridan, Richards and Slocum 1975, Lawler, Kuleck and Rhode 1975). Staw (1979) provides a general summary of this research into personal motivation in organizations:

"Motivation... has been generally conceptualized as the multiplicative product of expectancy and valence summed across a series of the most salient outcomes or weighted by the relative importance of those outcomes." (p60)

That is, motivation to act, M, is hypothesised to be a function of the product of expectancy that performance, P, will lead to outcome, O, multiplied by valence, V, of the outcome. This relationship can be expressed in the form

$$M = \sum \{(P \rightarrow O)V\}$$

This suggests that if an individual values a particular outcome and believes

that performance will lead to outcome, then that individual will be motivated to act. The inadequacy of this model has long been acknowledged. Lawler et al (1975) make an addition to this model, highlighting

"the distinction between two different kinds of expectancies.

The first (Effort-->Performance) expectancy refers to the probability that a person can perform the intended behaviour...The second (Performance -->Outcome) refers to the probability that certain outcomes will result from the intended behaviour." (p134)

It is argued that the generally conceptualized model actually refers to the attractiveness of the behaviour, A, rather than motivation to perform the behaviour, M. Thus

$$A = \sum \{(P \rightarrow O)V\}$$

and that

$$M = (E \rightarrow P) \sum \{(P \rightarrow O)V\}$$

Essentially their argument is that individuals will avoid behaviour that they believe is beyond their ability to perform.

Motivation, or meaning, derives from the presence of these three factors:

1. A value (V) attached to an important outcome (O);
2. The belief that a particular act (P) will lead to that outcome (O); and
3. The belief that with effort (E) the individual is capable of performing that act (P).

These three factors may be seen as identifying two phenomena that are significant in leading to action: direction towards an important goal and

the power to reach that goal. The personal experience of importance and of power is the root of effectual meaning.

The nature of the direction and the nature of the power that can lead to the practice of faith can vary widely from person to person and within the same individual. For example, the direction of John and Pat's faith was variously to have a closer relationship with God, to establish a residential home for young women, to help and care for people in need, to live fulfilled lives themselves, and to raise money. Far from an exhaustive list, these were directions at times throughout their practice of faith. To a large extent these directions were held synonymously.

Similarly, the power of their faith was the capacity of God, their own capacity, the help and support of others, their understanding of the situation, the manifest power of the Holy Spirit, and the financial resources of the Devon and Cornwall Housing Association. Again, far from exhaustive, these were "powers" that sustained John and Pat's activity throughout their practice of faith, and led to the success that they achieved.

These examples of direction and power can be categorized in terms of their source and form. This is the function of the model that is generated in this chapter. It is argued that these different sources and forms lead to the experience of different types of meaning, which will tend to give rise to action in varying ways.

Critical, Transcendent and Experiential Meaning

Faith may arise from three different sources of meaning:

1. Critical
2. Transcendent
3. Experiential

"Critical meaning" refers to the meaning derived from the individual's cognitive belief system. That is, the complex sets of arguments or analyses that form "means-end" networks of beliefs. These may be drawn upon to critically evaluate any given situation where

"the belief system is conceived to represent all the beliefs, sets, expectancies, or hypotheses, conscious or unconscious, that a person at a given time accepts as true of the world he lives in." (Rokeach, 1968).

"Transcendent meaning" refers to meaning that is received from an "authoritative" or "respected" other. The term transcendence is used in the same sense as defined by Kanter (1972):

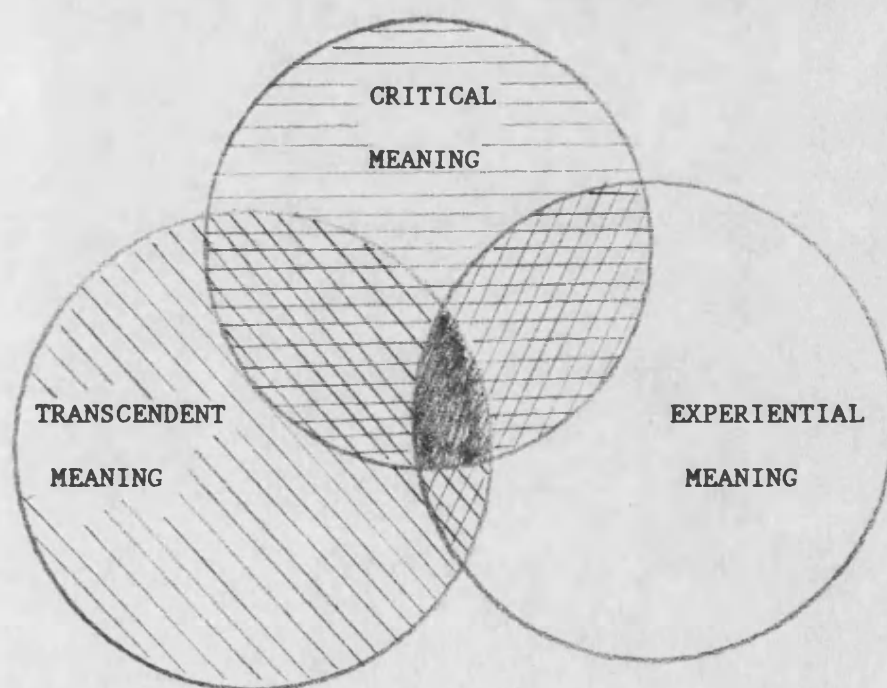
"Transcendence is a process whereby an individual attaches his decision making prerogative to a power greater than himself, surrendering to the higher meaning... and submitting to something beyond himself." (p74)

The nature of the "greater power" can differ widely. Kanter's research was primarily into the "commune" as a source of meaning, but this process might equally involve a parent, manager, peer group, social club, friend, or God. The essential element is that meaning is not rationally derived in the "critical" sense, but is received from another.

"Experiential meaning" refers, in its simplest sense, to the meaning that is received through the five senses of the individual. The particular use of the term here is to refer to those experiences of the senses that are at the edge of or beyond the critical understanding, and because of this these experiences have great power to influence the individual, by awe, pleasure, pain or excitement. The child who bursts her first balloon, first hand experience of "real" poverty in the streets of Calcutta, or perhaps the experience of extravagant wealth.

It is the argument of this thesis that faith may arise from critical meaning and transcendent meaning; and that experiential meaning can influence the practice of faith indirectly through its influence upon critical or transcendent meaning. Further, it is argued that there is a "synergy" of meanings where two or more combine to promote the same action.

We may show the possible combinations in the following diagrammatic representation of the model.



Faith that arises from the combination of all three (the shaded area in the centre) will tend to be stronger or more robust than faith that arises from a combination of just two (the striped areas), which will in turn be stronger than faith that arises from critical or transcendent meaning alone.

Critical Meaning

Kiesler (1971) suggests a model of attitudes which also contains three elements: the cognitive, the affective and the behavioural. The comparison may be taken almost exactly, such that critical meaning relates to cognitive attitude, transcendent to affective, and experiential to behavioural.

The term "critical" has been used, rather than cognitive, because it refers to the power of reasoned argument rather than to other forms of cognition, such as thought or memory. Faith is about adopting an attitude of certainty, which in this context will consist of the attainment of "knowledge". The "critical" ability of the individual will contribute to the production of a network of beliefs that form a convincing argument, such that one might argue for the "self-evidence" of the meaning. Smithin (1983) argues that,

"it can only be meaningful to say that something is self-evident if it would also be self-evident to any other human being presented with the same situation. This is in part what being certain means. Thus, rational argument through self-evidence is linked to certainty. It is this link to certainty which provides the compulsive power of this approach to argument." (p14)

It is this link to certainty which may also provide the power to practice faith that arises from critical meaning. By means of the critical faculty the individual may become convinced of the rightness of a particular course

of action.

Meaning, however, is not just a function of the network of beliefs, but it is also concerned with importance to the individual. The more important something is, the more meaningful it is. This is the nature of values as a particular type of belief. The practice of faith arising from critical meaning is about fulfilling the wants and desires of the individual. The practice of faith is a part of the activity of the individual in the search to attain valued goals and ideals. The relationship between values and action has been widely researched. Sumner (1968) notes that

"A number of philosophers have come to believe that what is common to value judgements as a class, and what distinguishes them from statements of fact, is that they have some special relation to action... Acceptance of a value judgement involves a commitment of the will, a decision to act, which goes beyond any mere description of the facts of the case."

The action that is the practice of faith arises out of such phenomena: a network of beliefs that form a convincing argument, and the desire to attain important, valued, goals.

1) The Power of Critical Meaning

Critical meaning derives power from its structure. As such it is a power held by the individual, the power of understanding. The extent to which the individual's belief system is developed will determine the extent to which that individual may interpret and understand the nature of unfolding events. Moreover, the extent to which that understanding is experienced as coherent, the individual will be more confident, for we experience that

"a statement is true if it coheres with other statements that we can make" (Bebbington 1979)

However, the confidence that may be derived from critical understanding will vary depending upon a number of factors beyond the coherence of argument, not least the support of respected others. This is the confidence that comes from transcendent meaning.

Transcendent Meaning

Transcendent meaning refers to the meaning that is received from a "greater power": a person or group that is accepted by the individual as having some superior capacity to determine the correct decision in a given situation.

Faith is an act that is freely chosen (argued more strongly in chapter 8) but this notion of "greater powers" might suggest that any response to the power of the other cannot be a free act. However, this is not necessarily the case, and certainly not so with a response that is faith. The literature on conformity sheds light on this issue (Festinger 1957, Kelman 1961, Palmer 1970, Kiesler 1971, Zurcher 1983), as the difference between social power and conformity is that the term "power" focuses the attention upon the influencer and the term "conformity" upon the behaviour of the one being influenced.

1) Compliance and Private Acceptance

The distinction is made between "compliance" and "private acceptance" (Kiesler and Kiesler 1969):

"conformity is...: a change in behaviour or belief toward a group as a result of real or imagined pressure... Two types of

conformity [are] compliance or private acceptance. Compliance refers to outward actions without consideration of the private convictions of the actor... the person is behaving as the group wants him to but does not really believe in what he is doing. Private acceptance means a change in attitude or belief in the direction of group attitudes or beliefs... This term has its parallel in the term "attitude change" used in studies of persuasive communications." (p 2/3)

Faith is concerned with private acceptance rather than compliance, in the same way as Herzberg (1973) distinguished between "motivation" and "movement". The quality of work life (QWL) was important to Herzberg, related to his "motivation factors" of achievement, recognition and advancement (1968). He argued that the responsibility of management was to provide "opportunity" that may be freely taken by the subordinate, constituting a learning experience. This external influence encourages motivation through private acceptance. The alternative style of management was the use of external incentives or punishments. This use of power leads, in a causal deterministic fashion, to movement resulting from compliance.

The important factor is that the influence is accepted freely: it is a willing act on the part of the actor to submit to the "greater power". Kelman (1961) is more specific, distinguishing between two forms of private acceptance: "internalization" and "identification".

Internalization, which contributes to critical meaning, refers to the acceptance of social influence when "the behaviour is congruent with his value system" (Kelman 1961). That is, a more cognitive process that

evaluates the influence with respect to already formed beliefs, and the influence is accepted to the extent that it fits with respect to that belief system.

Identification, on the other hand, refers to the acceptance of influence from a "greater power", and, according to Kelman, occurs to "the extent that he is concerned with the social anchorage of his behaviour". In other words, the acceptance will depend upon the relationship between the actor and the influencer. The "extent of concern" will depend upon the "attractiveness" of the influencer to the actor. As a result, when performing an act in response to the influence of an attractive other, Kelman (1961) suggests,

"he tends to perform it only under conditions of surveillance by the influencing agent. These conditions are met if the agent is physically present, or is likely to find out about the individual's actions." (p160)

Kiesler and Kiesler go on to suggest a way of considering the issues that is of use to the discussion here. This is summarised and expanded upon below.

The literature is clear that compliance does not require any belief on the part of the actor: it is essentially a behavioural response to the advances of a more powerful other. Kiesler and Kiesler argue that

"Compliance... refers to outward actions without consideration of the private convictions of the actor... the person is behaving as the group wants him to but does not really believe in what he is doing." (p3)

On the other hand,

"Private acceptance means a change in attitude or belief in the direction of group attitudes and beliefs... This term has its parallel in the term "attitude change" used in studies of persuasive communications." (p3)

Citing the work of Festinger (1957), they argue that private acceptance only occurs as a result of the perceived attractiveness of the influencing other, whilst most other variables produce compliance without private acceptance. They recognise for Kelman,

"the attractiveness of the other does not mediate "true" private acceptance. In Kelman's model, private acceptance produced by an attractive other depends on the continuation of the relationship with the other." (p69)

However, for internalization to occur, the "content of the influence attempt - whether it be a particular norm, behaviour or opinion - must fit with the subject's previously formed value system."

2) Attraction

Transcendent meaning is received from a "greater power" (Kanter 1972), whose influence is accepted, rather than complied with. Goodman (1977) suggests a reason for acceptance rather than compliance:

"The selection of referents is a function of the availability of information and the relevance or attractiveness of a given referent." (p110)

The topic of interpersonal attraction has received a lot of attention in the literature (Wortman and Linsenmeier 1977, Jones and Wortman 1973, Aronson

and Linder 1965, Backman and Secord 1959, Berlew and Hall 1966, Berkowitz 1969, Harvey and Clapp 1965, Jacob, Berscheid and Walster 1971), and focuses upon factors such as the perceived credibility and trustworthiness of the other, with considerable attention paid to the gain or loss of esteem as influencing personal attraction. For example, Jones and Wortman (1973) reviewing the literature suggest that

"most appreciate the attempts of others to consider their feelings and make them feel more comfortable. Thus an attribution to this cause will probably result in some increased attractiveness." (p136)

and similarly

"a person who is complimented on the job might conclude that his co-worker really meant what he said. We feel that people who offer their compliment in such a way that others believe they are sincere, and thereby convey their "genuine high regard" for the target person, will be very successful in eliciting interpersonal attraction." (p136)

Conversely,

"attribution of ulterior motivation or manipulative intentions is likely to result in a decrease in liking rather than an increase." (p135)

"Attractiveness" is essentially an affective phenomenon, related to the feelings rather than cognition. Thus we may equate "Transcendent meaning" primarily with the affective component of attitude.

Goodman (1977), however, points out that,

"The chief problem is that we know very little about factors

that affect the selection of referents and little about the process by which referents are selected. A second problem is that there is little specification about the kinds of referents people select. The traditional focus has been on another person, but varying types of referents (eg, the individual at a different point in time) might be considered. Third, given a particular referent, we know little about how the individual weights the relevance of the different input or outcome terms... Another problem is how to confine information from multiple referents providing conflicting information." (p109)

In a general context, Kelman argues that identification may be achieved through the "delineation of role requirements", referring to the development of a desired and recognised relationship structure. Goodman's observation indicates that the process of bringing this about is a complex issue.

3) Faith and Power

The literature on power (Lukes 1974, Bacharach and Baratz 1970, French and Raven 1959) identifies various types of influence which may be contrasted with the distinction between private acceptance and compliance. Power to reward and coercive power will lead to compliance without private acceptance. It was suggested by French and Raven (1959) that expert, referent and legitimate power each affects private acceptance, although this was not demonstrated. Kiesler and Kiesler propose the necessary acceptance of two assumptions in order to equate the different approaches in the literature:

"First, if legitimate power, referent power, and expert power increased Y's attraction to X (and reward power and coercive

power did not), then French and Raven's theoretical treatment of power would fit quite neatly with Festinger's discussion of compliance and private acceptance. Second, if we also assume that to some extent (or under some conditions) the effect of attraction to the other depends on a continued relationship with him, then Kelman's theoretical stance might fit neatly with the other two." (p70)

The notions of attraction and continued relationship are central themes in this study. Influence may be of a deterministic kind (coercive and reward power) but it may also serve merely to offer services that may be accepted or rejected freely (referent, legitimate and expert power).

Private acceptance, or faith, may therefore be practised in response to a relationship with an attractive other who has status or knowledge. The political process of such activity is unusual in that it is not, in the commonly accepted view of the term, a power process, as the initiative for action lies with the one being lead rather than the leader.

Experiential Meaning

Experiential meaning refers to that meaning which is derived from the five senses. The five senses of seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling and tasting are all bodily experiences. When we talk of behaviour, in contradistinction to cognition or affection, we are talking about the activity of the body. Therefore, experiential meaning is related to the behavioural component of attitudes.

Experiential meaning appeals directly to the experiences of the body. For

example, Lee Iacocca (1985), erstwhile President of the Ford Motor Company, describes an experience from his time at the top:

"Those were the days of wine and roses. All of us who constituted top management in the Glass House lived the good life in the royal court. We were part of something beyond first class - royal class, perhaps, where we had the best of everything. White-coated waiters were on call throughout the day, and we all ate lunch together in the executive dining suite.

"Now this was no ordinary cafeteria. It was closer to being one of the country's finest restaurants. Dover Sole was flown over from England on a daily basis. We enjoyed the finest fruits, no matter what the season. Fancy chocolates, exotic flowers - you name it, we had it. And everything was served up by those professional waiters in their white coats.

"At first we paid all of \$2.00 for each of these lunches. The price started at \$1.50, but inflation lifted it to \$2.00. When Arjay Miller was still vice-president in charge of finance, he complained about the cost. "We really shouldn't have to pay for these lunches", he said one day. "Feeding employees is deductible for the company. A lot of companies feed their employees without charging them at all. But if we pay for it ourselves, it's after tax money." We were all in the 90% bracket, so every time we spent \$2 we had to earn \$20.

"At that point a few of us got into a discussion of how much these lunches really did cost the company. In typical Ford style, we ran a study to determine the real expense of serving lunch in the executive dining room. It came out to \$104 a head

- and this was twenty years ago!" (p 96)

Experiential meaning evokes questions like "Why?", or perhaps for Iacocca at times, "Why me? Why do I get to experience these marvellous things?". This sort of experience makes for a good story, evoking vivid images in the mind that are easy and exciting to picture. Iacocca's language is rich as he tells this short story, an abundance of adjectives drawn upon to convey something of what it was like in these "royal" surroundings, the "wine and roses", one can almost smell the food and scent of exotic flowers, almost see the beautifully laid table with silver cutlery, and amongst all of this, picture the majestic purity of the "white-coated waiters". This was another world, a world of marvellous things, where, perhaps, anything could happen if only you believed hard enough.

John and Pat tell many such "good stories" that have considerable power and meaning for them. In a not insignificant way, this thesis is a story attempting to convey such experiential meaning.

The story told by Iacocca may provide vicarious experiential meaning such that bodily responses occur within the reader, for example a ready image of the "royal" executive suite, with feelings of awe and excitement, possibly even the imagined smell of "wine and roses", or the taste of the food.

It has been noted already that Kelman suggested three forms of response to social influence: internalization and identification (together comprising private acceptance) and "compliance". Kelman describes the latter as "the extent to which the individual is concerned - for whatever reason - with the social effect of his behaviour".

The scope of this, in terms of explanation for behaviour, is broad: "for whatever reason". At its worst, this describes the use of force upon the individual, with threat of punishment or sanction. Alternatively, a milder form is the description of a parent disciplining or instructing a child "for her own good". Experiential meaning refers to such influences that lead to compliance.

The notion of influence is probably the wrong one when talking of compliance, as the event involves the exercise of "power over" an individual rather than of influence (Lukes 1974). This, again, strikes an intuitive chord given the nature of the source of experiential meaning as "powerful experience" rather than the milder, less contrasting, "influential experience". It is the greater degree of "contrast" (Kelly 1963) that is significant in the experience.

Concerning the practice of faith, these factors are important. Firstly, faith is a freely chosen act, although possibly taken in response to the influence of another. Thus, if the response is one of "compliance" faith will not arise, but "movement" (Herzberg 1973). It is for this reason that faith cannot arise from experiential meaning alone. Kelman argues that compliance will occur in order to maintain "social anchorage" and involves the "limitations of choice".

As a result, experiential meaning involves no particular sense of direction, V, other than the experience itself, the experience of power. The reasons for the event are to be found entirely outside of the individual, who merely responds as a passive recipient. As such, experiential meaning is transient, ending with the experience.

However, that is not to say that it is entirely irrelevant for the practice of faith, for when combined with transcendent or critical meaning, an important interpretation may be attributed to the experience. Direction, V, may be joined with the power $(E \rightarrow P)(P \rightarrow O)$ that was remembered from experiential meaning. Language can be important in this remembering process through "telling stories" which provide a means of internalization or identification with the construal of the experience by "wrapping it up" in a manner that makes the experience palatable or usable. The key element of experiential meaning is the manner in which it can provide belief of power (potential means) to the individual.

From Meaning to Action

The particular implications of this model will be detailed in the following chapters, as John and Pat's story is told and the analysis developed in the attempt to answer the question "What is faith?". However, there are a number of general comments that can be made, based upon the particular structure and content of the model as it now stands. The most important of these is that "meaning is not enough". Action will not necessarily arise from meaning, but may possibly arise from meaning if the actor makes the choice and commitment to act.

Parsons (1965) "general theory of action" suggests a manner in which these three forms of meaning can be understood to lead to action through the process of choice and commitment. The most useful addition that Parsons brings is the emphasis upon the synergy of the three forms of meaning, such that they^{are} seen as "working together" to provide the individual with what Heidegger called a "knowing" which "is a kind of being which belongs to "being in the world"" (MacQuarrie 1972). Parson's theory outlines the

alternative approaches or "orientations" that may be taken towards social systems. Kanter (1972) summarises these suggesting that,

"a person orients himself to a social system instrumentally, affectively and morally. That is, he orients himself with respect to the rewards and costs that are involved in participating in the system, with respect to his emotional attachment to the people in the system, and with respect to the moral compellingness of the norms and beliefs of the system. In the language of social action theory he cognizes, cathects and evaluates." (p68)

Parsons (1965) suggests that cognizing and cathexis are "essential, simultaneous and inseparable modes" of orienting to social and non-social objects. The actor first "cathects" particular objects attributing to them importance for the gratification of impulse needs. This process has been described as the source of transcendent meaning where the object is construed as another person. Second, the actor "cognizes" the object field, determining the relations of objects one to another, such that some are more important, some less important. This is the process of understanding whereby the actor generates critical meaning.

Importance, or value, is rooted in cathexis through attaching affective significance to the object. It is in this sense that constructs derived from "greater powers" will "feel important". This importance is derived from the context of the relationship between actor and object.

The second but inseparable process of cognizing serves to provide description of the object "in context" with other related objects.

Importance, in this sense, is experienced not in feelings, but in the understanding of relative priority.

"Context" is significant in these two modes in that it is through contrast that the object may be construed: meaning arises from contrast (Kelly 1963). This notion of contrast is most apparent in experiential meaning, whereby experiences are more powerful the more they contrast with expected norms.

The experience of the "outside world" produces both transcendent and experiential meaning. The former results from the attribution of significance to the influences of an "attractive" other person. For example, parent, manager, friend or god. Experiential meaning results from the stimulus of objects or phenomena of the experienced world or from the actions of an "unattractive" other person. For example, a thunderstorm, excessive wealth, fire, or the coercive use of strength.

In summary, experiential meaning may lead to cathexis. To the extent that the actor cathects and cognizes, transcendent and critical meaning will develop. Parsons then argues further that

"When these discriminations become organized in a stable way, they form a system of orientation. The actor selects or is committed to culturally imposed selections among accessible objects with respect to their potentialities for gratification"

Selection occurs through the third mode of orientation: evaluation.

"The process of deciding among alternatives, of assessing them in the light of their ramified consequences, is called evaluation. Evaluation is the more complex process of selection

built upon the discriminations which make up the cognitive-cathetic orientation." (p4-6)

This is the process of "choice" that has been argued to be essential in the practice of faith, for behaviour that does not result from "private acceptance" is not faith but compliance. The act of selecting or choosing a behaviour is more or less committing, or binding, upon the individual, depending upon the circumstance of the action. However, this third factor of evaluation is essential if action is to arise from meaning. Meaning can remain as feelings, experiences or cognitions without developing into action. Choice and commitment are the means by which these experiences of the individual are "grounded" to convert into tangible behaviours.

A Summary of the Model

The following diagram provides a summary of the elements of meaning that have been identified in the development of the model in this chapter. Each area of meaning is described in terms of

1. Attitude

Faith is defined as a "complex form of attitude", and attitudes are defined as having three components: cognitive, affective and behavioural.

2. Response to Influence

Faith is practised by individuals as a part of the world in which they live, and represents a form of "knowing" that reflects this attribute of "being-in-the-world" (Heidegger in MacQuarrie 1972). In particular, the response of the individual to influences in the world will lead to different forms of meaning.

3. Basis of Response

The response of the individual to influence will depend upon three different

factors: congruence with current beliefs, the attractiveness of the source of influence, and the desire for social anchorage.

4. Manner of Achieving

The success of the influence will depend upon different actions, performed either by the influenced actor or by the influencer. These are, the re-organization of the means-end network of the belief system by the actor, the developed structure of the relationship between actor and influencer, and the limitation of choice for the actor by the influencer.

5. Direction

Faith has direction, and the source of this direction differs with the source of meaning.

6. Power

Faith is based on two categories of belief: the confidence held by the individual that the identified performance will lead to the desired outcome, and the confidence that with effort the individual can perform the necessary activity. This confidence will be dependent upon a source of power, and the sources of power will differ in nature for each form of meaning.

7. Persistence

Effective faith is persistent, able to endure conflict. The characteristics of each form of meaning will influence the persistence of the faith that arises.

8. Constructs

Non-verbal construct will be important in all forms of meaning. Verbal constructs can be used to communicate meaning. However, this has relevance only to critical and transcendent meaning.

From these meanings may arise the action that is faith if the actor chooses to make a commitment to relevant behaviours.

CRITICAL MEANING

1. Attitudinal Component:
Cognitive
2. Response to Influence:
Internalization
3. Basis of Response:
Value Congruence
4. Manner of Achieving:
Re-organization of
Means-End Network
5. Direction, V:
Internalized Values
6. Power, (E--P)(P-->O):
construal of effective
means, argument
7. Persistence:
durable (until "change
of mind")
8. Constructs:
Verbal and Non-verbal

TRANSCENDENT MEANING

1. Attitudinal Component:
Affective
2. Response to Influence:
Identification
3. Basis of Response:
Attraction to referent
4. Manner of Achieving:
Developed structure of
Relationship
5. Direction, V:
Received Values
6. Power, (E-->P)(P-->O):
Capacity of Referent
7. Persistence:
Sustained for duration
of relationship
8. Constructs:
Verbal and Non-verbal

EXPERIENTIAL MEANING

1. Attitudinal Component:
Behavioural
2. Response to Influence:
Compliance
3. Basis of Response:
Social anchorage
4. Manner of Achieving:
Limitation of Choice
Behaviour
5. Direction, V:
Experience itself
6. Power, (E-->P)(P-->O):
force of experience
7. Persistence:
Transitory
(reaffirmed in story)
8. Constructs:
Non-verbal

A Model of Three Forms of Meaning

Some Concluding Remarks

The strong relation between the model developed in this chapter and Parsons' general theory of action suggests that the argument of this thesis is widely applicable. This was implied by much of the discussion in Chapter 1. However, as was also proposed in that chapter, my interest has developed from the general consideration of action to focus upon some particular aspects that are of importance to me. It is with respect to the issues of personal development that I direct some concluding remarks concerning the model that has been generated in this chapter.

1. Integrity

It has already been suggested that faith will be strongest where it arises from all three types of meaning: cognitive, transcendent, and experiential. This is also a description of the "integrity" of the individual: the extent to which all three components are in harmony, or can be, without suppression, harmonized. It is not necessary for each meaning to be equal in importance to the individual, merely that accepted meanings are not contradictory.

Developing the idea using Festinger's dissonance theory (1957), we may determine that this will be the preferred state, as the lack of integrity will produce discomfort for the individual. As a result the system will tend towards a natural state of "internal consistency". This may be achieved pathologically by suppression of one or other form of meaning (for example, as critical meaning has been argued to have been suppressed to a degree in the Plymouth situation). It may also be achieved by means of the confident attribution of priority of importance to one or other form of meaning with the acceptance or tolerance of levels of ambiguity and dissonance. The optimal situation is the attainment of a state of actual consistency,

possible perhaps with less complicated attitudes, but necessarily the unattainable "ideal" with respect to the "complex attitude" that is faith (Cooper and McGaugh 1966). More important as a practical guide to action will be the transient "experience of integrity", that, to the extent that a person feels and is cognizant of a unity between all three elements, there will be a tendency towards peace and contentment rather than inner turmoil.

In illustration we may consider my experience of research as outlined in the chapter on methodology. The early stages of the research evidenced "two worlds of meaning". Firstly, Plymouth was lead by transcendent meaning (responding to John and Pat's charismatic lead) and complemented by experiential meaning (for example, the experience on the tree stump). The rationale, or critical meaning that was relevant tended to follow from both of these, finding a position of integrity, but most certainly as the lesser element in the triad. In Bath, my world was led by cognitive meaning, and the developed understanding of myself as a person with definite ideas for a future career in the academic world, with the immediate aim of pursuing postgraduate work. This was strongly complemented by transcendent meaning, deriving from the "mentor/mentee" relationship that I had developed with Colin over my years as an undergraduate (personal tutor/tutee), postgraduate (supervisor/student), and as member of his research unit. Experiential meaning contributed in a less dominant role, at times influential in leading to "research excitement".

The difficulty described in the methodology chapter came as a result of any attempts to "integrate" these two worlds, as there was a clash of strong meanings that were not complementary:

PLYMOUTH

Transcendent

Experiential

Critical

Faith as obedience, submission
non-intellectual, exciting
enjoyable.

BATH

Critical

Transcendent

Experiential

Faith as intellectual,
independence, directive,

I argued in the methodology that my primary research achievement was to live with this dissonant ambiguity until both worlds could be reconciled without having to sacrifice one at the expense of the other.

To give a name to the relative importance of the different types of meaning, I believe that the best "faith profile" will actually be dependent upon the situation, and particularly the nature of "social influence" that exists. For example, if there is no influence from a "greater power" then transcendent meaning ought to be less important.

A related methodological point is that the common tendency is to seek integrity in the shortest possible time in order to minimise the pain of dissonance. The result will be that the weaker elements of meaning will be sacrificed to the stronger. For example, in the body of the story it will be noted that John and Pat favoured transcendent and experiential meaning, critical meaning being consciously relegated to a subservient position. This lead to John and Pat quite openly suggesting to me,

"Pete, you are inhibited in your faith by your intellect. We have known a lot of people who suffer this because they are too clever."

It was never quite so openly stated in the same way, but my guess is that the equivalent comment in Bath would have been:

"Pete, you are inhibited in your research because you are too trusting, you respect other people's opinion's too much (especially John and Pat's). I have known a lot of people who suffer this because they don't have enough confidence in themselves."

The problem was, I knew that both of these things were correct, but I did not know what to do about it whilst maintaining integrity in both worlds. Fortunately the two worlds were sufficiently separated geographically to allow me to continue a schizophrenic existence, master of neither world but participant and observer/learner in both, until I now know what to do. However, this required that I accept pain as a necessary or inevitable factor as I sought my goal of joining the two. The alternative would have been to have left one of the worlds.

The implications for practice, consequently, depend upon your time- horizon:

- in the short-term integrity will be served by taking the "line of least resistance". However, as a result, the long-term benefits are indeterminable, but I would expect unsatisfactory;
- in the long-term integrity will be served by living with ambiguity, but short-term stresses and strains may be too difficult to cope with causing withdrawal and avoidance. However, "if things work out", the potential benefits, as I argue in this thesis, are great.

2. Personal Strengths

Just as personalities and abilities differ from person to person, so will inclinations towards particular sources of meaning. The dominance of one element over another may be a good rationale for determining the sequence in which the move towards integrity should flow. This is simply because the dominant element is dominant because the individual is more able in related skills, and consequently more likely to be correct in interpreting the world in that way. If, objectively speaking, the individual is less likely to be correct (for example, because of common pitfalls or biases, such as the cognitive biases noted in the chapter on critical meaning), the individual is still more likely to be able to resolve the situation, drawing upon a wider repertoire of skills having had more experience of that type of mistake. Either way then, whether the individual is right or wrong, the principle of following dominance without omitting consideration of the other sources of meaning is probably the best one.

An interesting point about this research study is that it is an example where there was no obviously dominant element for both situations - Plymouth's transcendent and experiential meaning was not dominant to Bath's critical and transcendent meaning. Given that a choice was not forced, "sitting on the fence" was a powerful research strategy.

CHAPTER 4

IMPORTANT VALUES

The foundation of faith in an individual is an important goal, a valued direction, maybe just a seed that says, "I care. This is important to me." In this chapter it is argued that these important seeds are "values": using Kelly's (1963) work, a particular type of construct in the individual's construct system. If we can identify some of the values held by John and Pat, we begin to understand the basis of their faith.

Identifying Values

Rokeach (1973) defines values thus:

"To say that a person "has a value" is to say that he has an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end state of existence is personally or socially preferable to alternative modes of conduct or end states of existence." (p159)

The values of an individual are a subset of the beliefs that the individual holds. Furthermore they are "enduring", they are not readily subject to change. This is a reflection of the structural properties of belief systems, which encourages the maintenance of a coherence and consistency between individual beliefs held by the individual. This lies at the root of Festinger's (1957) dissonance theory, as dissonant information challenges the coherence and consistency of the individual's belief system. Kelly refers to such "enduring beliefs" as "core constructs". There is a

centrality in their importance such that other constructs may even be adapted and changed to fit in with them.

Kluckhohn (1951) provides another useful definition:

"A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action... It should be emphasised here, however, that affective ('desirable'), cognitive ('conception') and conative ('selection') elements are all essential to this notion of value." (p395)

The salient addition of this definition to that of Rokeach is that of a heightened emphasis placed upon "affective elements", referred to by Rokeach only implicitly in the term "preferable". Preference can often be an intangible thing, difficult to articulate particularly where cognitive elements are given greater emphasis and legitimacy, as in the processes of negotiation, deliberation and argument in the organizational setting (Smithin 1983). Preference and values can prove difficult to justify, a case of "can't say why it's better, it just is" (Eden, Jones and Sims 1979). It was argued earlier that faith is a complex attitude with "deep affective meaning" (Cooper and McGaugh 1966). The emotion that is stirred by values is a powerful thing. This is often used by the experienced orators who are able to draw upon the energy of the listeners.

It will be suggested that, following the model outlined in the previous chapter, values may contribute to critical and transcendent meaning held by the individual: value constructs having a cognitive, affective or

behavioural basis; respectively, valued ideas, pleasurable emotions or enjoyable sensations may all be values.

Values as Constructs

Armstrong (1979) stresses the view that values are constructs rather than concepts, thereby drawing upon Kelly's Psychology of Personal Constructs as a basis for the understanding of man. Bannister and Mair (1968) describe this difference between concepts and constructs:

"Sometimes concepts are also regarded as ways in which certain things are naturally alike and really different from all other things. The use suggests that a concept is being considered as a feature of the nature of things, an inherent categorization of reality. The idea of a construct does not carry with it such assumptions, but rather it is seen as an interpretation imposed upon events, not carried in the events themselves." (p26)

In this way a value as a construct is seen as a preference of the individual, such that if an event or mode of conduct is defined as valuable, then the consequences, including the motivation to act, will reflect that definition, to paraphrase Thomas (1928). This implies that in attempting to identify "values" the researcher must identify that which is construed as important by the individual, rather than to assume "objective" value in any event or element.

Methodologically this may pose some difficulties. However, Armstrong (1979) identified five aspects of values that may be used to observe and identify values in the research setting. These aspects reflect the definitions of values outlined above:

1. Relationship to action
2. A concept belonging to an individual
3. Expectation of a future state
4. Expression of preference
5. Structural properties.

These characteristics provide an operational approach to the study of values in an organizational setting. These will form the framework for the analysis of the data in this study of values.

Values and Parental Influence

Scharfstein (1980), in studying the lives and nature of thought of various philosophers, commented,

"The common observation that parents have a strong and lasting influence upon their children has been dramatized, deepened and refined by psychoanalysis. Once sensitized to such evidence, I, for one, have found it confirmed and reconfirmed in my experience." (p56)

Both John and Pat believe that their parents values were influential in influencing their own value systems, having an effect on their current way of life. Beginning with a sketch of aspects of their upbringing, based on John and Pat's own accounts of important events, a picture of the structures of their value systems may be started. We may also observe the close relationship to action in their lives in the main period under study in this research.

Further, it may also be noted that these same values have been

"internalized" (Kelman 1961) in later years, such that these same values are expressed as constructs belonging to them.

Pat is the eldest daughter of Methodist parents, and it is evident that she holds them both in high esteem. Her father, who died nearly ten years ago, had a very caring attitude towards the less privileged members of society. As a social worker for much of his life, he would visit and help many such families. Talking to Pat even now, she remembers well her father's concern and interest in these people.

"My father didn't have any formal social work qualifications like you need now, but he cared for the people that he was working with. Most of them used to think the world of him."

This set of values was also evident in the manner in which both her parents later cared for the boys in a Barnardo's Home that they ran for a number of years.

"I remember well the relationships that [my parents] built up with the boys at Barnardo's. They used to work themselves into the ground but some of the boys used to keep in contact for years after they left and got jobs."

Pat is the first to admit that her father's life made a profound impression on her. This was not limited to his work, but also to his way of life. One of the stories that I have often heard Pat tell about her father reflects well the nature of this relationship.

"One day Chris, my sister, and I were angry about something and we began to shout at Mum. When Dad heard us, he came out of the living room and told us to stop it immediately. He said, "I

don't want to hear you speaking to your mother like that ever again. Until you hear me speaking to her in that way, I won't stand for it." The thing was, we had never heard him speaking to Mum like that, and we never did."

Admiration for his attitudes and way of living has led to Pat, quite unashamedly, imitating many of his values. The most powerful thing, however, is to hear Pat talk about her father, even now some ten years after his death. Her respect and love for him and what he believed is passionate.

Similarly, John's childhood is recognised as having a considerable influence upon his values. However, it is of note that this is usually described as having had a negative rather than positive effect with respect to their work at the present time. The direction that their lives were to take ran counter to some of his father's strongly held beliefs.

One such belief that John recalls was of considerable importance was certain aspects of the "responsibility of a father and a husband" that his father taught him

"My father's view of life was - I don't know if it still is, but it certainly was at the time and had been for a long time, of course he'd pumped it into me - that as a man, as the leader of a family, my primary duty in life was to keep a roof over my family's heads and put food on the table. If I had to work a hundred hours during a week at a job I loathed and detested, that was immaterial."

Seen in the light of the work that John and Pat undertook, John can be seen

to be putting these values into practice in a very positive manner; taking responsibility to "father" young people who were not well provided for by their natural families.

However, with respect to certain actions concerning his own family, Pat and their son Pete, these values were a source of great difficulty. At the beginning of the project, two of the most important decisions that they took were to sell their house (without knowing where they would be going) and for John to give up his job (without seeking paid employment elsewhere). The values that John's father espoused ran completely contrary to this direction. This provided a not insignificant problem for John. Pat commented

"I actually believe in most ways it's been far easier for me than for John. His training and education in formative years has proven a block."

John, however, did not find this a permanent hindrance, for talking about this problem of conflict between his long held views and his more recent desires to respond to other influences, he said:

"I am aware of this influence at the back of me that is becoming less and less."

Social Values

Certain social values can be seen as prominent in John and Pat's activities in Southampton, particularly in their Christian youth work. In the middle of the seventies John and Pat took over the youth work at a small Baptist church in Southampton. Their dedication to the young people of the area was notable, particularly to those 'that no-one else wanted to care about'- the young people from the local council estate.

At its peak the Saturday evening Youth Club had a membership of around fifty, and John and Pat had started a Wednesday evening club for the under-twelves which soon swelled to similar numbers. Both John and Pat were occupied in demanding full-time jobs in the nursing profession but they still operated a policy of running an 'open house' to the youth club members. This meant that little of their time was not committed.

This is the earliest notable evidence known to me of a determination to act in ways that were different to the norm for the situation, a characteristic that is prominent in their later practice of faith. They were recognised by many as "a bit fanatical" in the way that they went about their task, "There is something a bit odd about spending all of your time with kids, and never having time for a normal social life", commented one of the mothers of a club member.

In 1986, two years after beginning the venture that forms the focus of this study, John reflected upon their previous way of life and how things had changed:

"I think we were perfectly normal and conventional for quite a time."

This seems, however, to be more of a relative statement, contrasting John's perception of their current way of life with the situation a few years before. Pat recognised that even then

"... there were a lot of Christians who thought we were potty to undertake the youth work and the intensity of the programme that we did in Southampton; and even though we didn't give up our house and work security, certainly we would have had a lot more

money if we'd not been involved in the youth work that we were.
Right back from the beginning we were always willing to spend
our money on the youth work."

There was a tendency to act "outside of accepted norms". Pat makes reference to one such norm, that you "spend your money on yourself" rather than "spending your money on youth work". The mother of the youth club member quoted above cites another, that "you spend your time socialising with people of the same age" rather than "spending all of your time with kids".

It is not that John and Pat would disagree with such "normal" values, but that they put their efforts and resources into alternatives to which they ascribed greater importance. They valued the norms, but valued their own objectives more highly. This gives a good insight into some of the structural properties of their value system. There is evidence of a centrality of these values concerning social action, more central than other values that, although held, were given less weight, less importance by John and Pat. As far as Armstrong's criteria for identifying values are concerned, these events provide evidence on a number of grounds. There is a strong expression of preference in John and Pat's actions, as they chose to follow an alternative path to more conventional values. Their commitment to action is evidence of the value attached to these constructs. Further, working largely on their own in their work provides evidence to suggest that these values were internalized, that these were indeed values "belonging to an individual".

Christian Values

Their commitment to Christ and a growing interest and involvement in the

activities of the Church both locally and nationally were also significant in influencing their values. Although not necessarily in stark disagreement with the cultural norms, John and Pat could be seen to attribute a greater significance to many of the biblical values. For example, Pat expressed her opinion of a preferred way of life:

"As you know, my favourite verse is from Matthew 25 where Jesus said "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me"."

In the summer of 1988, John and Pat attempted to write a short document for others explaining the "Spiritual Ethos" of their work at "The Spring". In this they stated

"The scriptural foundation of "The Spring" was based on Saint Matthew's Gospel, chapter 25 v31-46. Jesus explained how he wanted us to care for all as He had, and show that love in practical concern as well as spiritual and emotional healing."

There was internalization of these values from the Bible, not merely identification. This applied similarly to the values of certain Christians and Christian groups throughout the country at that time.

For example, John recalled

"We were going through a phase then of looking to Teen Challenge as a blue-print of what should be happening in this country."

At the height of their work with the youth in Southampton, John and Pat took a group of young people to a series of meetings held in Crystal Palace football ground. These meetings were run by David Wilkerson, an American minister who became famous for his work with warring gangs of youths in the slums of New York, establishing the organization known as Teen Challenge. His first book, "The Cross and the Switchblade" (1963) contains the preface which, although a little dramatic in the style of a fiction thriller, expresses some of the values that John and Pat were to take on board:

"The face of a killer started David Wilkerson on his lonely crusade. One night in his country parsonage, David picked up "Life" magazine and saw the tormented face of a teenage gang member accused with six others of brutally murdering another teenager. And David Wilkerson had to help.

"Thus began one of the most inspiring missions ever to take place in New York's hell-holes. Armed only with the Gospel, David went into the slums - and the miracles happened. Crime-hardened gang leaders knelt in the streets to pray, frightened children sobbed out their loneliness and anger, heroin mainliners found the courage to break their addiction. Today TEEN CHALLENGE, founded by Wilkerson, is a fast growing movement throughout the country, helping lost teen-agers find a new life in the Holy Spirit." (foreword)

The sentiment expressed in this passage, the prominence of certain values, is mirrored in John and Pat's work and life. Teen Challenge is an organization that helps youth throughout the world, with a particular reputation for successful drug rehabilitation using a residential scheme. It was at the time of their visit to Crystal Palace that some of the young

people had made Christian commitments, and John and Pat were seeing them struggle to live their lives in a new way. It was during this period that the idea for an extended family set-up was considered for the first time. This was the beginning of a longing to establish a residential home. Pat recalled talking to an old friend who preaches on the Methodist circuit in North Devon,

"There was one point when I mentioned setting up a home in Southampton to Mary and she said how big a thing it was. For a lot of reasons it wasn't right then..."

This occurrence is useful for the analysis here because, as Armstrong points out,

"The operational usefulness... is that an individual who expresses an anticipation of events may be employing values."

The anticipation of opening a home was evident at this time, in the late 1970's. However, at this time they did not believe that they could bring it about.

Plymouth

Another important figure was Gordon Wright, a Christian from Plymouth who had made a visit to Southampton in the mid-70's to talk about the "Crossline" telephone counselling organization. John and Pat heard that Gordon had set up this organisation to help depressed, suicidal and needy people in the early nineteen seventies, giving up his job as an architect to take on a counselling ministry full-time. In response to his talk the attending ministers from the Southampton area indicated that there was no need for such an organization. Southampton, apparently, did not have such

problems! This had incensed John and Pat, and they subsequently visited Gordon in Plymouth whilst on holiday in the West Country. John commented

"We visited Crossline in Plymouth. This was all a part of the need that we'd seen that wasn't being met by the Christian church in Southampton."

A few years later, but while they were still living in Southampton John and Pat were approached by an old friend who had recently been ordained as a Baptist Minister and had obtained a position as Pastor in a church in Saltash, a small town across the River Tamar from Plymouth. John recalls the conversation:

"Graham Giles said, "I'm going to be the new Minister at Saltash Baptist Church". I said, "Oh good. Well, when you get settled in we must come down and visit you." "Well", he said, "I want you to do better than that." "What do you mean?". "I want you and Pat to seriously consider moving down there and taking over the youth work for me."

Following a number of visits to meet the local inhabitants and to assess the job situation for John, they decided to move. This was the summer of 1982.

John and Pat were prepared to move down to Plymouth with the prime intention of taking on the Christian youth work at the church at which Graham was Pastor. The priority was the youth work, finding paid employment came second, fitting in with the move. John remained in Southampton working out his notice while Pat moved to Plymouth with their son at the beginning of the new school year. This relationship to action again provides evidence that the constructs being identified are indeed important values to John and

Pat.

Power to Achieve Valued Goals

John and Pat were motivated to help people: "we've always been at the 'social services' end of the Christian spectrum" was how John once described it. When they began their "adventure in faith" the search for a house was one part of their attempt to fulfil this aim. This, however, was generally seen as a secondary task merely serving the goal of helping people. The faith that they committed themselves to was closely tied up with being able to help people better.

Their faith in God was that he would help them to help others. This began largely as a development of their work in Southampton, merely on a larger scale with more time to commit. However, their changing faith in God, which led them to give up their jobs and expect God to provide the finance to support the work, also changed their approach to helping people. Pat believes that the story that forms the latter part of this chapter about Sally is important because

"Sally was very much the first of what I call "spiritual ministry" rather than trying to work her problems through; and God showed us very clearly that that was the way forward."

The "social services" Christianity of the youth club days evolved into "spiritual ministry". Since the time in 1983 when John and Pat had committed themselves to a radically different way of life, their faith in God had been changing. With each experience they saw God in a different light and committed themselves accordingly.

This change in their faith was developmental and involved a growing belief that they had access to power that would enable them to achieve their valued goals. For example, early in 1984 they visited a Christian community in Sussex called the Hyde. Pat commented:

"I think the Hyde was vital. It was a very important step in spiritual growth. We saw a dimension of Christianity that we'd never even thought about, let alone been involved in..."

The manner in which they lived, the faith that they had in God, the way that they prayed, the miracles that they expected to see (and saw) in terms of healing and financial provision: all of these were aspects of life at the Hyde that challenged and excited John and Pat. For example, the community at the Hyde had purchased a property known as Roffey Place for use as a Bible College.

The story goes that they did not have the money needed to buy the property, although they believed that God had indicated that they could expect to purchase it. Colin Urquhart, the leader of the group, was on a preaching tour of Singapore while they were still in need of three hundred thousand pounds. Whilst praying in his hotel bedroom, he recounts, God told him "I will give you a million dollars". He says that this was the point at which he had faith that they would get the property. However, having paid a sixty thousand pounds deposit, they were unable to meet the deadline for payment. They managed to arrange a second deadline. Shortly after this, Colin Urquhart returned on another preaching tour of Singapore and while in the airport lounge waiting to return to England his host asked him if they had purchased Roffey Place. Colin told him that they were still short of three hundred thousand pounds. His host told him that the money would be

transferred from his account to their bank account in England as soon as possible. It transpired that this was the equivalent of one million Singapore dollars.

This sort of "direct and miraculous intervention by God" was the dimension of Christianity" that John and Pat had not previously experienced. This was to become a stronger and stronger element of John and Pat's faith. With God involved John and Pat believed that they could achieve marvellous, even "miraculous", things.

The values outlined here concern an emotional commitment to God and the physical, experiential excitement of being involved in God's acts of power, for example, the miraculous provision of finance or of healing. These themes are developed in the chapters on transcendent and experiential meaning.

So far the story has identified those important values that were internalized over a number of years, or those with which John and Pat "identified" (Kelman 1961) following the influence of "attractive" others. The value of experiential, powerful acts becomes more evident, as John and Pat describe situations where they believe the power of God was evident to heal a young lady that they were trying to help. The value attached to such phenomena by John and Pat is evident, following Armstrong's criteria for the identification of values: the manner in which John and Pat's actions were influenced, their ownership of the story, the hope that the acts of power give to their desire to help others in the future, the obvious preference that they express, and the developing structure for their lives incorporating the phenomena of healings and miracles as a part of their "ministry".

Their faith enabled them to put their efforts into a different way of life. John and Pat tell how this way of life has led to people being helped in many ways. This is their story of one girl who was given help.

Sally

JOHN "It all started January the second, 1985. Pat was on duty in Crossline and this young lady phoned. She was desperate. She had made a Christian commitment about six months before and felt that this was going to change her life - and it hadn't: she still had all the old hurts and problems... She reached January the first and decided that she either had to grab hold of Christianity or chuck it in because it wasn't affecting her life enough. She wanted life changing moves or at least she thought she did."

PAT "She's twenty one. She phoned the office on New Year's Day... and basically said "I need some help"... [On the second of January] she arrived in the office completely dressed in black. She had beautiful auburn hair which had been uncared for - not dirty, but she hadn't had it styled or anything, she hadn't had it cut. It came like that down her face so all you could see was a little tiny bit of her face."

JOHN "It was actually over her eyes, she was peering through it."

PAT "She said she knew she couldn't go on as she was and she virtually said to God at the end of '84 "If you're up there, help me - I need some help." She was, at the time, sharing a

flat with a non-Christian who she'd met in town - she hadn't got any good friends at the time. The girl was unemployed and in as big a mess as Sally and they said, "Look, we hate our bedsits: let's get a place together."

"Her family had more or less rejected her by this time. She wasn't in touch with her father, and her mother had died. Her sister and brother-in-law were fed up to the back teeth with her because she couldn't hold down a job and she just couldn't get her life together at all. Her brother-in-law was very materialistic... She had been in a bedsit and was very lonely and had wandered into St Andrews church a couple of times as something to do... She wandered one Sunday morning into Mutley Baptist church, and although she would tell you now that it went straight over her head, basically she was interested... She went to Plymouth Christian Centre one week and actually became a Christian there. The gospel was presented very clearly and she chose to accept it. She still carried on going to Mutley: there was a very active youth group and she started going to that, but she still couldn't relate to anybody, couldn't make friends, couldn't do anything really."

JOHN "She was very much a loner, wasn't she."

PAT "Yes, and her idea was that if she wore black and covered her face with her long hair then nobody knew she was living. I saw her a couple of times in Crossline and I said, "Why don't you come and have some lunch?". I picked her up from Mutley Baptist

one Sunday. There was only John and I in the house. She was a vegetarian. I went to finish off preparing the lunch. She tells the story beautifully of how terrified she was when I walked out of the room and left her with John. I don't think she said one word to him while I was out of the room."

JOHN "Well, hardly. I mean, I was sat there trying to make conversation with her and it was all bouncing off."

PAT "Even with a woman she couldn't string more than two or three sentences together. I started to go and see her regularly. John backed off because of the 'man thing'.

"Parkland had taken her on as a member of staff in the adolescent part. Here she was: twenty one, an absolute wreck, working with girls aged between fourteen and eighteen who were indescribably awful. She wasn't sleeping at night worrying about this job. One of the first major things I said was I thought the job should go... She was terrified of telling her family... but she just wasn't coping..."

"She gave her job up and then there was another question. She hated living in the flat because the girl she was living with was sexually very active... Sally had this thing about men and sex."

JOHN "And she kept bumping into strange men in the bathroom."

PAT "She was very unhappy... It got taken out of her hands because her flatmate moved back home up North, meaning that she either had to find someone else to share or find somewhere else. She'd got nowhere to go, and we weren't sure. Now we're more experienced we'd know a lot more what to do. At the time she went to live with Bob and Wendy, which, on reflection, was not the right thing to do.

"Wendy was always trying to get Sally out of the house. Now I would never put her with someone we knew as little about as Bob and Wendy. Wendy was not a tolerant person at the time and she was also incredibly house-proud. Only Wendy was allowed to do anything, and that was all the wrong sort of atmosphere...

"She built up a good relationship with Bob which has helped her to get over her fear of men. I think we'd have picked up things a lot quicker now, whereas we didn't. I mean, I suppose I should have known she would have been frightened of men when I left her alone with John, but I didn't even think of it. Now I'd say "Come with me...". In some ways Sally was the guinea pig that Marion had been, but in a different way."

JOHN "That's right."

PAT "Marion had been the guinea pig in many ways of what we'd be doing, who God wanted us to work with, how to approach situations where violent men were involved and so on. Sally was very much the first of what I call "spiritual ministry" rather

than trying to work her problems through; and God showed us very clearly that that was the way forward.

"In the end we took her in with us at Cleeve Gardens - out of desperation more than desire. At the time we were thinking that we might get 78, Durnford Street very quickly.

"She was still wearing a lot of black, but she had a couple of royal blue sweaters, pale stuff...

JOHN "You know Picasso had his blue period - so did Sally."
[Laughter]

PAT "She would wear things like that, but a sleeveless top, for instance, was absolutely taboo - even in the hottest weather."

At this point, John told a story of how, a few months later, he had taken Sally out along the coast near Plymouth in his fourteen foot boat with an outboard motor. It was a beautiful day and shortly John was wearing only a pair of shorts. Sally, however, was wearing a tee-shirt, cardigan and jumper. Eventually she removed her jumper. "There was sweat pouring off of her. I said, "Sally, are you alright?". "Yes, thank you" she replied."

PAT: "She spent a lot of time in the house. Pete, our son, was in Plymouth, but not living with us... She started very much to relate to Bob and Pete and to John. Of the three of them, she found Pete, funnily enough, less of a threat than the other two. Looking back I think it was because he was young (20)... and it

was blokes who are slightly older that she had the problem with... She began to pick up a good relationship with Bob. John was the last to go because of his age and the fact that he was the father figure...

"One day I said, "Sally, have you ever been abused?", and she said, "No, sometimes he used to look at me." That's what I mean by Sally being the guinea pig, because I just left it and thought "Oh well, I'm obviously wrong", whereas now I would take what I felt much more seriously.

"...Her mother was an alcoholic and from the time she was young, until she was seventeen when her mother died, she'd come home from school and find her mother drunk on the kitchen floor, and she'd have to clean up the sick and that sort of stuff. Never allowed friends round to the house... She'd no friends. We'd talked all that through, and talked through all the grief. Three weeks after her mother died, her father came home and told her that he was remarrying and that his new wife didn't want her in the house so would she find somewhere to live. She was pretty upset and she went and got a bedsit. That was really the continuation of the rot, living in a grotty bedsit on her own. It totally ruined her.

"She was really anti the church because her father went to Rev B.I's church, and B.I came round to her and said, "What are you doing ruining your father's life?" Didn't she realise she was now seventeen and should be capable of holding her own life

together. And it wasn't fair on her father. She had quite a thing about the church and about B.I. Until quite recently it really upset her - she's got over it now.

"All of these things we'd gone through and she was still incredibly depressed at times, you know she would look awful...

"I remember it so clearly, it was the first time that anything like this had ever happened to me. She asked me if she could talk to me on my own, because she knew there were things she'd got to talk about and she didn't want to talk about. So we went in the sitting room and she sat there talking about how frightened she was of men and how she knew she was upsetting John by not being able to respond to his very natural fatherly affection and she knew, in her mind, that there was nothing more to it and that he would never do anything to hurt her. But she couldn't, there was something inside her that stopped her. She was very frightened of having a boyfriend, very very frightened of this that and the other. And we shared along these lines for a while.

"I think John was pretty upset at the time that she could respond to Pete and Bob more than to him and he found it was quite painful because by that time he was quite fond of Sally. In fact, at that stage, emotionally, he was a lot more attached to her than I was. I was quite fond of her, but he'd got a real special place for her whereas to me she was just somebody we were trying to help.

"But we sat and we talked, and then all of a sudden, I couldn't tell you what made me say it except it must have been God, I just looked at her and said, "Sally , has your father sexually abused you?". I'd asked her that before, but very much in a cold situation and she'd obviously got intellectually and mentally controlled, but this time she hadn't and it was obviously the time God wanted to break it. And she just cracked up, she just screamed, and she just broke wide open. I was absolutely petrified, I thought, "What on earth have I done?"."

JOHN "Pat came out of the room, her eyeballs were out on stalks [laughter] her face was ashen white. I remember thinking, "What on earth has been going on in there?"."

PAT "Well, they'd heard the screams for one thing. Anyway. I said, "I need some help praying" because I knew I couldn't do it alone. You ought to get Bob's side of the this - it took him three weeks to recover! Bob and John came in and we started to pray. Fortunately I'd been to John Wimber's conference where he'd shown very clearly that this was the sort of thing God wanted to heal emotionally, and it was obvious that this was what he wanted to do. And we started to pray, I hadn't a clue what I was doing, I said, "God, I haven't got a clue what I'm doing, you're going to have to do it through me." And I just started to ask God to come in and show her she was clean, because that, really, is the sexually abused thing."

JOHN "They feel dirty."

PAT "In fact, most of them go through a phase of having three or four baths a day to try to clean themselves up. Sally had. We just prayed and prayed and then she got that, er, sort of cleared up.

"Then we had tea and she said she felt awful again and she looked at me and I thought "oo oo oo oo"". John and Bob said I looked completely in control, but that was the last thing I felt inside... It was very obvious that God hadn't finished, and during that evening we prayed again and God came in dramatically and we watched her totally healed from the sexual abuse and the repercussions. It was an amazing experience which I will keep to my dying day. We've prayed for people since and had similar responses, but this was the first. And it wasn't even sought after, it wasn't "Right, we're going to minister to Sally"... She'd been very tense, stressed, haggard at times, walking like this, with a pack on her back, and we just saw God lift it. She straightened up, her face changed."

JOHN "She was free."

PAT "She would say to you that she knew that that had been dealt with. There were a few bits and pieces from that that we had to deal with. She went through a lot of hassle getting to the point of forgiving her father. That certainly wasn't done that afternoon. She was very bitter about it and her whole family's approach and we took quite a long time over that. But it was just so amazing to watch God work. I mean I was absolutely

exhausted by the end of the day."

"After that there were just dramatic changes. She started to buy light coloured clothes, she got a part-time job in a dentist... it all started to slot together really.

"A bit before this experience she'd asked to have a talk and I spent some time with her. I called John in to pray with her and she was going on about how she wanted to give all of her herself to God and she really wanted to be free..."

JOHN "I said "Sally, what would you do if God wanted you to get your hair cut?" Well, she went potty, absolutely stark, staring potty."

PAT "Angry, she was angry."

JOHN "I'd very obviously reached out and twanged the string that was taut and, oh, she vibrated..."

PAT "She was stamping around the house moaning about these people who kept on to her. It got so bad I said to her "Sally, don't feel you've got to stay here, you're not tied here". I said, "Do you still want to go to town?" She snapped, "Yes." When we dropped her she went up New George Street and she was walking at such a pace, with such a temper, you could see her auburn hair going up and down. We sat and watched her, and I wouldn't have been able to give you an assurance that she would come back, not

to live with us."

JOHN "She was angry. I've never ever seen her so angry. Normally she's a very placid person."

PAT "We got back home at about four and we were worried. At about five-thirty the phone rang and there was this little voice at the end of the phone saying, "Hello Pat, it's Sally." I said, "Hello Sally. How are you?". "I'm alright. I shall be catching the bus home." Then she said, "Pat? Who does your hair?" [Laughter].

JOHN "So Pat gave her the name and telephone number..."

PAT "...and she went and made an appointment.
"Looking back on it, it was funny, but at the time it was awful."

JOHN "We were desperately worried about her."

PAT "She had it cut a couple of days later, and she hated it because she could see most of her face."

JOHN "She went around pulling it all over her face. "I feel naked" she said. She did, too."

PAT "But this was all in the few weeks that we really broke through. And the next thing that went was the vegetarianism. God had very

obviously been starting on that as well, because, although she made an excuse that it was as a result of the way animals were treated, it very obviously wasn't. And it was tied up with an anorexia that she had, and you can hide in vegetarianism: "I can't eat that, I'm vegetarian." She'd gone down to almost six stone at one point... in a desperate bid to get acceptability by her family. She had this complex about her sister being beautiful with a lovely figure and she was short and horrible and fat and all the rest of it. So, she was anorexic, but she would also binge: six or seven bars of chocolate straight off. She made John and I a sponge cake one day. When we came in she made us a cup of tea and gave us a small piece of cake: she'd eaten the rest of it!

"We'd actually done a lot of work on the anorexia and the bingeing and she'd come to the point of eating normal meals. She would still binge occasionally, but to be honest, once the sexual abuse thing was dealt with, there was a lot of improvement in the bingeing. Then God started on the vegetarianism. We sat talking one day because she felt awful and I just said, "Have you considered that God might want you to give it up?". A few months before she would have done the haircut thing... I felt sorry for her: she thought God wanted her to eat a ten inch steak, raw. She had a very tiny piece of fish, and then chicken, once we'd prayed it through.

"It became obvious that God wanted her to move out from us. Her part-time job at the dentist faded out completely and so she

went back on the dole... It increasingly became obvious that God wanted her to see that she could live alone, that she had actually come through. We prayed and prayed and prayed and she got a little flatlet. It was part of the house of a little old lady: she had had some alterations done and she only had someone in the house for company.

"John and Sally went and decorated the place and made it look nice, and she put all her stuff in. It had a little tiny bedroom above, and a kitchen and a tiny little sitting room. So it wasn't a bedsit, which she had been terrified of going back to. It also meant she'd got somebody else in the house: she got on very well with the old lady. She spent a lot of time with us, but gradually she started to invite friends round for meals.

"She only had it for about two months. She couldn't get a job. She went to London for a visit and met up with a few people there and decided it was right to move. She moved January of this year (1987). She's grown so much it was obviously right.

"What she found incredibly difficult in Plymouth, and still does when she comes back, is that a lot of the Christians won't accept what God has done and she still gets treated as a spiritual cripple, which she finds very difficult. I'm sure that's the main reason why God has taken her out of Plymouth because she went to a church in London where they believe in that sort of thing (emotional healing), and also she was accepted as herself rather than as "having been with John and

Pat".

"She went to an employment agency and they asked her what she had done, so she told them about the dental job. They had a lot of temping in dental nursing so she did some of that... Then she worked for this dentist in the Strand and he offered her a full-time job. His nurse was leaving, and Sally has been there ever since. She's sharing a flat with four other Christians."

Summary

Important Values

This chapter has identified a number of the values that were of importance to John and Pat. This was performed using the list of criteria for identifying values outlined by Armstrong (1979). Overall, the thing that does not come out of Armstrong's list is that it is possible to spot values simply by listening for what the individual likes to talk about. Given the opportunity, a listening ear, and a comfortable, trusting environment, it was impossible to stop John and Pat talking about their work: it was the most important thing in the world to them. When they were talking there was inspiration in their words. Following Armstrong's factors,

1. John and Pat loved to talk about doing something, action
2. What they talked about was very much personal to them
3. Underlying much of what they said was a preference for desired future, particularly for the people that they were working with
4. As they talked they exuded energy, enthusiasm and vision
5. There was a strong and developing structure. As Pat once described their vision for establishing a residential house to provide this sort of care:

"It fitted in with everything we'd ever done"

The values that John and Pat held provided a direction for their faith as the awareness of the "power" to achieve developed in their lives. The sources of power are addressed in the following chapters. Based upon these "enduring values", their faith was persistent and came to influence their whole way of life. The way they thought, the feelings they had, the choices they made, and the things that they did were all inextricably linked to their practice of faith.

CHAPTER 5

ACTION ARISES OUT OF CRITICAL MEANING

John and Pat held valued goals, having a vision for a preferred future. As a direct result, the actions of John and Pat can be viewed as an example of entrepreneurial leadership. It is in this sense that this work is most easily related to current management literature (Peters and Waterman 1982, Campbell 1989, Inkson, Henshall, Marsh and Ellis 1987, Iacocca 1985, Collins 1985, Edwardes 1983, Harvey-Jones 1988, Morita 1987). Kanter (1983) suggests that,

"Entrepreneurs are, above all, visionaries. They are willing to continue single-minded pursuit of a clearly articulated vision, even when the line of least effort or resistance would make it easy to give up. But they also need other people to contribute to and participate in their efforts. And so, as circumstances create opportunities for corporate entrepreneurs to move beyond their jobs to act boldly and creatively - to the great benefit of their organizations - the collaborative process through which they acquire the power to act also serves as a check on their actions. In an ironic sense, freedom and control, individual action and teamwork are roughly equilibrated in innovating organizations. As individuals with an entrepreneurial bent find the power tools to initiate innovation, they create and work through participative teams. And those teams make it possible for other potential entrepreneurs to step forward with useful new ideas." (p240)

Collaboration comes out of shared meaning, the extent to which different individuals can agree upon a goal that is of interest to all of them. Over the next three chapters three different sorts of meaning will be looked at, concentrating on the impact of that meaning upon the propensity of the individual to practice faith. Following Silverman (1972) it is argued that "action arises out of meaning", and the action that is the practice of faith may arise out of each of the different types of meaning identified.

The centrality of values and their relation to the inspiration and motivation of self and others is a key factor. Planning and preparation are vital for successful innovative activity. The critical faculties of the individual are therefore of considerable importance in facilitating the practice of faith. Critical meaning refers to the ideas and valued goals that an individual holds and recognises as his own. In particular, critical meaning refers to the arguments and rationales that may develop to form a structure in those ideas and goals.

The Means-End Network of Beliefs

Critical meaning is distinguished from transcendent meaning and experiential meaning in that it refers to internalized beliefs or constructs. Together, these beliefs are organized to form a "system of beliefs" (Rokeach, 1968). Referring to this belief system, with particular reference to values, Armstrong (1979) suggests that,

"The most likely structure for the whole system is hierarchic as this permits a mechanism for resolving conflict and ambiguities between values, enables an individual to effectively store a large number of values, and ensures short-term stability". (p4.10)

This hierarchy may be described as a "means-end" network of beliefs, such that the individual will have beliefs in actions or phenomena (means) that may serve in the attainment of valued goals (ends).

Following the model from chapter 3, critical meaning may lead to action when the requirements of power and important direction are met. That is, where there is a means-end network in which the ends are values (important directions), and the individual believes in the effectiveness of the construed means to achieve those ends (power).

For example, I may desire something to eat. Critical meaning will give rise to action if I know that there is a food shop open, that I have sufficient money, and that I can walk to the shop. The end is the consumption of food, the satisfaction of my desire; the means are the open shop, my ability to travel to the shop and my capacity to purchase food.

Subjective Expected Utility and its Limitations

A great deal of research has gone into the problem of decision making under conditions of uncertainty, with the most prevalent approaches to decision aiding following the pioneering work of Vroom (1964) in the generation of "Subjective Expected Utility" models of decision making. Lawler, Kuleck and Rhode's (1975) model is one such model. These models are prescriptive, suggesting how decisions should be made. The basic structure of the SEU model fits well with the "means-end" structure of critical meaning, taking the form

$$SEU = \sum_i P_i \cdot U_i$$

where P_i is the subjective probability of outcome i , U_i is the utility of

outcome i . These utilities are multiplied by their probability and summed to obtain the overall subjective expected utility.

The rationale is that the option which scores the highest SEU will provide the largest "payoff" for the decision maker, combining value with likelihood of outcome. Through reducing the decision making process to a consideration of the three factors of outcomes, probabilities and utilities, the model enables the actor to make reasonable decisions.

Research has identified a number of the limitations of this approach. Drawing upon the work of Eiser and Pligt (1988) and others (Kahneman and Tversky 1972, 1973) the most prominent of these are:

1. Combining the assumed, quite substantial quantities of information in one's head simply exceeds our computational capacity;
2. People find it difficult to learn and use a weighted sum decision rule; that is, in tests people frequently could not use the decision model assumed by SEU models even if they tried;
3. Many of the axioms upon which the model is based are contradicted by empirical evidence; for example, perceptions of values and probabilities are not independent, probability assessments tend to be poorly calibrated, and the reliability of utilities of desired outcomes is fairly modest and not consistent across different situations;
4. Substantial evidence exists that people have difficulty thinking probabilistically;
5. The manner in which decisions are presented, the number of alternatives and even the presentation of irrelevant information can affect a decision outcome (see, for example, Belton and Gear, 1981). This limits the applicability of normative theories which tend to assume that the decisions

are reached the same way across contexts. Further there are different decision making strategies for different situations.

As a result, Eiser and Pligt argue that,

"People seem to rely on simple heuristics for making probability judgements and hardly seem to think about more complex combinations of values or utilities involved in a decision. In other words, people's decision processes seem relatively inarticulated and are hardly compatible with the sort of "rigorous, systematic thinking" required by SEU formulations".

(p80)

Our capacity to draw upon critical meaning is limited. Consequently, developing critical meaning may only be of limited assistance in promoting the practice of faith in situations of uncertainty. If action is to arise, then meaning will have to come from another source.

Some Practical Implications

These considerations are of particular importance to the expert or consultant who seeks to facilitate individual or group decisions by means of models that appeal to the cognitive abilities of those involved, with such assumptions as are embodied in an SEU approach. If decisions are to be supported by providing models that do perform the "rigorous, systematic thinking" that is likely to improve the decision, then these factors of decision practice must be taken into account. If, as the research findings seem to indicate, people will not appreciate the complex patterns of argument, then the consultant or facilitator who is able to perform the analysis must communicate something other than the model, but based upon the model.

This process is addressed by Eden (1988) who argues for consultant practice that takes into account both "process" and "content":

"The process management issues are not taken as independent of the content management issues but rather each aspect informs the way in which the other skill is utilized. Thus, the traditional model building and analysis skills of the operational researcher are used to handle the complexity that faces a team of managers working on a messy issue; but the management of this complexity is not undertaken without insuring that the nature of the model and its analysis are powerful facilitative devices for the better management of the process by which the managers will arrive at something approaching consensus and commitment to action. Indeed the aim of seeking consensus rather than compromise, and commitment rather than agreement is the measure of success for the use of the SODA approach (it is sometimes helpful to conceptualize this difference as an orientation to "problem finishing/alleviation" rather than "problem solving"...)." (p1)

Eden is referring to an approach that goes beyond SEU assumptions when he suggests "the management of the process by which the managers will arrive at something approaching consensus and commitment to action". This approach is not as concerned with reaching a "right solution" as it is in helping the actor or actors to make a decision that can be acted upon and carried through.

This implicitly recognises that there are "meanings" out of which action may arise that are not purely "critical"; that the meaning given by the

understanding of the individual may not be sufficient to "solve the problem" cognitively, but it is possible to "manage meaning" in such a way as to draw consensus of and commitment to "a meaning" from which action may arise. This line of argument will be developed in the following chapter.

Leadership and Confidence

It is said that "in the world of the blind the one-eyed man is king". Similarly, in the world of the confused and uncertain, the confident man will be the leader. But what enables one to be confident while others are not? What is confidence?

Confidence is a recognition of the power to complete what is necessary, following the common conception of power as the capacity to achieve an end result (Bacharach and Baratz 1970, French and Raven 1959, Lukes 1974). We may distinguish different forms of confidence: self-confidence, confidence in others, and confidence in objects or phenomena. Critical meaning is concerned primarily with self-confidence; confidence in others and in objects or phenomena are related to transcendent and experiential meaning, respectively.

We may understand self-confidence as a reflection of the individual's personality, indicating the extent to which the individual experiences personal competence. Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs is helpful in providing an overall picture of what may constitute confidence over a wide range of situations.

Maslow's hierarchy contains five levels, each representing "needs": physiological, security, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Maslow's

thesis is that each level must be satisfied before the next level will become a source of motivation. In other words, where there is a "lack" in any of the lower levels, the actor will not seek to fulfil the needs of the higher levels. The capacity or power of the individual will be a reflection of the ease with which these needs may be met.

Self-confidence will depend upon the level in the hierarchy that the individual is at and the nature of the particular situation and the demands that it places upon the actor. For example, if the individual is called upon to lead a group of people but does not feel confident in his ability to hold a conversation (capacity to fulfil needs for belonging) then there will probably be a lack of confidence in leading a group which is a higher order activity, offering fulfilment of esteem or self-actualization needs.

Defining self-confidence in these terms provides a further description of the practice of faith, for faith will be required in the process of meeting needs that have been hitherto unexplored or provided by others. Importantly, four of the categories of activity may or may not require the practice of faith, depending upon the state of the actor. Thus, obtaining food to meet physiological needs will be an uncertain activity requiring faith if this has always been provided by a parent; or making friends will require faith if it requires entering new types of situation.

However, the fifth category, of self-actualization will, by definition, always require the practice of faith to be met. The need for self-actualization is the need to be something more than one is already, to be what one could be. This is the realm of perpetual uncertainty, for once a situation becomes certain or easy, it will no longer satisfy the need for

self-actualization.

The process is the same as the promotion from other levels in the hierarchy to the level above, but the nature of the goal is different. The first four levels describe needs that are demanded by our physical body or psychological nature; what have been called "drives" in the motivational literature (Freud 1955, Lorenz 1950, Lewin 1935). The fifth level has no such "natural, internal" direction that is common to all men; self-actualization is derived from the attainment of socially defined goals, which will become "drives" only to the extent that they are internalized. An individual may self-actualize in seeking the goal of a referent other through identification, and it is this that forms the subject of the next chapter.

In this thesis, faith is considered primarily as the attempt to fulfil this desire for self-actualization, focusing predominantly for John and Pat on the internalized values outlined in the previous chapter, and on the "socially defined goals" that were communicated by God. Self-confidence to practice such faith will derive from the capacity of the individual to fulfil the needs of the four levels below; that is, the extent to which John and Pat's physiological, security, belonging and esteem needs had been met.

This describes the development of John and Pat's construct system, with an emphasis upon the constructs of skill and capacity to achieve their needs in a variety of situations.

Faith and the Means-End Network

Faith is necessary to perform an act when the individual does not have the necessary constructs to predict and control (Kelly 1963) the "means" in order to reach the desired "end". That is, the individual is facing a situation that is sufficiently novel to mean that the individual is aware that she does not have the relevant constructs that would enable full understanding.

For example, some of the cars that I have owned have been inclined to break down at inappropriate times. The pattern of activity following breaking down would be reasonably predictable, but the outcome less so: I would spend two minutes exhausting my knowledge of car engines, and then be aware that I did not know what to do. In this case I would often choose to fix my car "by faith", guessing at possible problems/solutions.

Once, for example, my indicators would not work, and so I began fiddling with wires on a random basis. I was practising faith in my own ability, a confidence that I was doing "something reasonable". This is the practice of "trial-and-error", and based upon previously tried and tested behaviours that were guessed to have possible relevance. This is the creative activity of "making connections" in the "means-end" network. In terms of Maslow's hierarchy, my confidence can be described as "sufficient respect or esteem in my own abilities" (level four).

In this case my faith was mis-placed as I became very confused when both indicators started to flash simultaneously. I knew that this old car of mine did not have hazard warning lights, so I had "tried and erred" quite badly. In the end I had to disconnect the battery to stop the indicators flashing.

The next day, after seeking the advice of a mechanic in a garage that I was passing, I discovered much to my embarrassment that I did have hazard warning lights and that I should look for the switch! This severely dented my confidence, and I sought the assistance of a more knowledgeable friend, a transfer to transcendent meaning.

Although it cannot be guaranteed, faith may thus arise from critical meaning to make new connections in the means-end network, building upon the confidence in the existing construct system in the desire to achieve a valued end.

Values and Motivation

The previous chapter identified the prevalence of a number of values that John and Pat held and developed over the years leading up to the beginning of their work in Plymouth. Following Inkson et al (1987) and their "Theory K", we may identify a few key values that John and Pat flew as "Kites":

caring concern and interest for those less privileged

love for the unlovely

care for those in need

feed the hungry, comfort the stranger, cloth the naked, look

after the sick, visit the imprisoned

providing family

care for the young and the youth

providing a home

helping young people to find/create a new life (cf Teen Challenge).

These were values that were readily communicable and in many ways synonymous with what John and Pat stood for: they evidently lived their lives on these

values.

These values can provide direction for action. However, the individual requires more than valued goals or objectives before he is motivated to act. The individual also requires confidence: confidence in the ability to perform a task, and confidence that performing that task will lead to the desired outcome. This combination of values and confidence was outlined in chapter 3, in the discussion of Lawler, Kuleck and Rhode's (1975) model of motivation.

This may be seen in the actions of John and Pat who considered the viability of establishing a home for young people while they were living in Southampton, some seven or eight years before they began their venture in Plymouth. John said of that time in Southampton when they were considering the idea of a residential home, inspired by their experiences with the Teen Challenge organization,

"We recognised that there was a desperate need for that sort of thing. I think we recognised that we would like to be involved in something like that. But we certainly didn't have the vision or the foresight to see how, or us actually doing it."

This statement expresses the three elements of Lawler's model of motivation: recognising the need for a house - believing that a house would

perform the necessary function ($P \rightarrow O$);

we would like to be involved - John and Pat attached value (V) to it;

we didn't have foresight to see us actually doing it - cannot perform

the intended behaviour ($E \rightarrow P$).

In John's opinion, the only element that was missing of these three was the third: the belief that they were ready and able to perform the task. Pat's post-rationalization was that

"For a number of reasons the time was not right then for us to set up a house in Southampton."

The main reason was that they did not believe that they could do it. This element is of importance in a consideration of their practice of faith, for it was this element that changed in the period 1983/1984 and lead to John and Pat starting the project to establish a home for young people. The idea (P-->O) was similar, modelled upon the Teen Challenge approach, and the values (V) as identified above were still held in a comparable form. By some means, however, John and Pat had come to the position of believing that they were able to perform the task (E-->P).

Achievement as a function of Time and Circumstance

More of the picture is suggested by Ackoff and Emery (1972). Identifying different forms of valued outcome that provide direction Ackoff and Emery and others (Eden et al 1979), have distinguished between ideals, objectives and goals.

"a goal... is an outcome that a subject intends most strongly over a set of environments and a time interval, and that is attainable in these conditions..."

"an objective is a desired outcome that is not obtainable in the time period being considered, but progress toward it is possible during that time period, and it is obtainable at a later time..."

"an ideal is an outcome that can never be achieved." (Ackoff and Emery 1972) (p56/7)

Comparing this with Lawler's model, the factors of importance for "belief in an ability to perform" (E-->P) may be identified as "attainability" in a given "time interval" over a "set of environments". In the story that follows these three criteria are of importance as John and Pat seek their goal. The notion of time is important to the practice of faith, but in a particular sense. As Campbell (1989) points out that, where activities are driven by values rather than by the pragmatics of a situation, and there is a developing "sense of mission" that will guide the work, an important rule of thumb to acknowledge is that

"It takes years, not months".

John and Pat did not appreciate this fact at first, but it took over three years of dedicated work before they eventually moved into the house that was their first residential home. They had expected it to take months, but it had in fact taken years. That is, John and Pat had an operational goal of establishing a residential house but it soon became evident that this must be viewed as an "objective" rather than a "goal".

Critical meaning was influential because the internalization of their enduring values enabled them to keep going until they achieved that objective. In Eden's (1988) terms this "objective" may be seen most usefully as a "strategic option", a goal obtainable in the medium-term that serves to take a step towards what Ackoff and Emery term "ideals": the valued outcomes that drove the overall activity. These are the "kites" identified above, values that sum up the activity of the work. For John and Pat this meant "caring for people, helping them to live happier lives".

In following chapters it is suggested that, as well as critical meaning,

transcendent and experiential meaning were important for John and Pat in coming to the belief that these objectives were "attainable". John and Pat's beliefs and values knitting closely with the influence of attractive "greater powers", most notably God, and with experiences of power that were related to the development of their vision. These "influences" were an important part of the different "environment" or circumstances that John and Pat began to discover in the evangelical and charismatic Christian world around them.

Their environment, or "set of environments", had been the more traditional Christian world-view, with strong puritanical overtones, that emphasised the responsibility of the individual to live to the best of their ability a sinless and hard working life dedicated to God. This changed to a world-view that emphasised more the influence of God and the power that was available through prayer for miraculous healing and provision.

However, while they lived in Southampton these sources of meaning were not readily available to John and Pat. It was perhaps only in their last year in Southampton that they began even to be aware of any way other than "doing the best that they could" and "working it out for themselves". Significantly, their ability to work things out for themselves took a very severe knock in 1981 as Pat became very ill.

In Southampton, and for the first part of their time in Plymouth the predominant source of meaning was "critical meaning". This can be seen as we begin to develop the story of John and Pat's practice of faith.

Leaving Southampton

John and Pat's ideas for a home in Southampton never came to fruition; indeed, it never became anything more than a good idea. The most significant development over this time was a very unpleasant one. For a number of years Pat had been suffering from very bad rheumatism and arthritis in the knee and hip joints of both legs, and gradually this was becoming worse. As a result of the progressively limited movement that this ailment brought about, Pat began to suffer from very serious circulatory problems in her legs, resulting in her admittance to hospital with blood clots in her legs on more than one occasion. Her post as a Nursing Officer necessitated a great deal of walking from ward to ward, and it soon became apparent to Pat and her superiors that she would soon be unable to carry out her daily work. In her late thirties, Pat was pensioned off on the grounds of ill-health.

This was a devastating blow to Pat who was, and still is, a very ambitious person who gained a great deal of fulfilment from her work. The prospect of becoming a house-bound cripple could never be considered an easy one to face.

Shortly after Pat's retirement they were approached by an old friend who had recently been ordained as a Baptist Minister and had obtained a position as Pastor in a church in Saltash, a small town across the River Tamar from Plymouth. As John and Pat understood it, the Rev. Graham Giles suggested that they might like to move down to Saltash to help him in his new church by running the youth work.

This was congruent with their value system at that time: it was what they had been doing in Southampton for a number of years, to great effect for the

young people and to their own satisfaction. Graham's offer was therefore attractive to them, particularly as he was promising greater support and freedom than they had been allowed in their work at Millbrook Baptist church.

There were good reasons for making the move, doing work that they valued and that they knew full well they were able to do. Further, John said to me some year later,

"An important thing that I don't think I liked to admit to myself at the time was that it was an opportunity to run away from a job that I wasn't enjoying, to make a fresh start. I was an SEN at the time; I had failed my nursing finals twice and only had one chance left. When Graham suggested that we moved down to Saltash, I was very keen."

The argument was growing in favour of a move to Plymouth, although Pat was not as keen as John. Following a number of visits to meet the local inhabitants and to assess the job situation for John, they decided to move. This was the summer of 1982.

John remained in Southampton working out his notice while Pat moved to Plymouth with their son at the beginning of the new school year. Within two weeks of arriving in Saltash Pat had determined that Graham Giles no longer wanted them to take over the youth work. Telling this to John over the phone, Pat was interpreted as being depressed because of her state of health. Unfortunately Pat's forebodings proved to be correct, but by the time this was firmly established moving back to Southampton was out of the question.

John eventually moved down and was soon working at a Home for delinquent teenage boys a few miles outside of Plymouth. Taken on to provide the necessary medical expertise on the staff, John's role was work with the teenagers often merely providing a supervisory presence. Given his experience with the youth in Southampton, this had seemed an ideal alternative to another job as an SEN in one of the hospitals in Plymouth. This, again, we may see as having a strong critical rationale underlying the action. Unfortunately John found the conditions at the home completely intolerable. He describes the set up as

"A regime that was based on brute force and cruelty. The senior staff member was ex-army and a complete sadist: he would take pleasure in picking on the biggest boys and humiliating them in front of the others. I actually witnessed him pinning one boy to the ground in front of all of the others."

John's way of working was far more gentle, hoping to encourage a trusting relationship through which the youth could learn. This, however, proved impossible as the boys had no respect or trust for any figure in authority. After three months John was close to a nervous breakdown, unable to sleep and mentally exhausted.

The youth work at Saltash Baptist Church also failed to develop as they had hoped. Eventually they were asked to stop their involvement with the youth work completely, and so the primary reason for their move to Plymouth had been removed.

The actions that John and Pat had made in moving to Plymouth had been based upon a rational assessment of what they wanted to do and what they could do,

based on previous experience. However, even given their previous success and reason for confidence in such activities, they had "failed". They had taken a bold step uprooting their family, leaving behind relatives, friends and a reasonably content way of life in Southampton. However, their faith was not reaping many rewards.

This was hardly the basis for the visionary thrusts that were to follow. The next two chapters go on to describe influences and events in their life that served to give new meaning to their presence in Plymouth. However, the values and beliefs that took them to Plymouth were not to be discarded: they were still to form the basis of confidence and to provide the overall direction of what was to come. The main difference was that they obtained new confidence to practice faith not from fresh understanding and experience but from a belief in their access to a new source of power: the power of God.

Summary

Critical Meaning

John and Pat's activity throughout their practice of faith was entirely rational: they were not being stupid, even if at times they and others thought that they had been, or even at times when they made mistakes. There was a strong critical meaning that was guiding and underlying their faith. They had considerable experience and understanding of the practice of helping others, particularly young people from troubled backgrounds. They also valued this form of activity, not least as an expression of their belief in "social Christianity".

However, their understanding, their own capacity was not enough to enable

them to achieve their goals and objectives. This was becoming increasingly obvious with Pat's growing infirmity. If they had worked harder, if they had planned more carefully, could they have achieved their goals? It is possible that they could have succeeded in some measure, but it is also possible that they could have continued to meet with failure. The problem is that there are limitations on our individual capacities, even on our capacities to rationalize and "work things out".

Critical meaning refers to the cognitive means-end network of internalized beliefs and values. This critical meaning can provide a source of confidence for the individual in strong arguments for the veracity of particular beliefs. Such confidence can form the basis of leading, innovative action.

Faith is required in situations of uncertainty, when critical meaning does not provide a completely convincing argument. However, the confidence that comes from critical meaning can provide a sufficient base from which the actor may take a risk and act. The practice of faith involves taking a step "beyond oneself", beyond what is already known.

The direction for these steps is provided by valued goals and objectives. If the individual believes that these goals are attainable in a given time interval and in particular circumstances, then faith may arise. Where the goal is perceived to be less attainable, the situation more uncertain, action may still arise where the goal is of great importance.

In chapter 4 a number of John and Pat's valued goals, objectives and ideals were identified. Their actions reflected these values, as they cared for young people in their church in Southampton. One objective that John and

Pat considered was that of establishing a house to provide accommodation for young people to help them to escape from the pressures of unfavourable home environments. However, John and Pat did not believe that this was possible.

Offered the opportunity of developing the youth work at a church near Plymouth, John and Pat decided to leave Southampton. The circumstances in Plymouth promised to be more favourable, perhaps helping them to attain more of their goals. Moving to Plymouth also offered John a new chance for attaining more satisfaction in his work, something that he had failed to find in Southampton.

Pat, at this time, was becoming increasingly frustrated in her ambitions by a worsening illness, and as time progressed she was able to do less and less. Her self-confidence was weakened as the infirmity led to her enforced retirement.

The move to Plymouth did not live up to expectations, and in fact it soon squashed their confidence even more. The cold, damp weather of the first winter exacerbated Pat's condition, they were not allowed to run the youth work that they had been offered, and John's job was very unpleasant and stressful.

Their confidence in themselves and in their youth work had been strong, and out of this critical meaning had arisen some bold steps in moving to Plymouth. Unfortunately, their faith in themselves was not rewarded and the situation led to a decrease in their confidence. Their critical meaning had deteriorated.

Within a year, however, they were considering taking steps of faith that were well beyond their previous actions. The following two chapters address two other sources of meaning that may be distinguished from critical meaning, which are argued to be the primary source of their renewed activity and confidence.

CHAPTER 6

ACTION ARISES OUT OF TRANSCENDENT MEANING

A great deal of research has gone into the question of whether a multiplicative model of expectancy and valence is most suitable in determining motivational force (Heneman and Schwab 1972, Mitchell 1974). This research has concentrated upon providing a contribution to critical meaning. Staw (1979) suggests that perhaps instead

"one should ask under what conditions would individual motivation be expected to approximate a subjective expected utility (SEU) model, and when it would be less rational?" (p77)

He goes on to suggest possible lines of approach, for example,

"... many individuals may merely model the behaviour of salient others or follow the path that appears appropriate for a person from a particular family background or socioeconomic group. Individuals may join an organization or perform at a certain level because "it seems the right thing to do", rather than its being the product of subjective expected utility." (p77)

The literature on conformity points towards this sort of approach (Festinger 1957, Kiesler and Kiesler 1969). This chapter considers the influence of referent others. This is referred to as the transcendent meaning that may be held by the individual. This is meaning that comes from "beyond oneself", from what Kanter (1972) has called "greater powers".

The discussion of this chapter will begin with a consideration of decision support, particularly contrasting the implications of transcendent meaning for decision making with the more common approach to decision support which is rooted in critical meaning.

Approaches based upon subjective expected utility (SEU) are beneficial in considering critical meaning, but may miss other meaning that is held by the individual. In order to overcome this inadequacy, other approaches need to be considered that will help in working with transcendent as well as critical meaning. Following the literature (Eiser and Pligt 1988), such approaches will be referred to as "heuristic" approaches to decision support to distinguish them from the more common SEU approaches.

Heuristic Approaches to Decision Support

Heuristic data may include constructs that come directly from family influences, or as a result of a poverty-stricken upbringing, for example. These constructs may not have a strong rationalization in terms of "self-evidence" (Smithin 1983), but will nonetheless influence the way that the individual can choose to behave.

The first stage in considering a heuristic, or "non-rational" (as opposed to "irrational"), approach to decision support is that of "awareness" and "acceptance of validity" of such data. First, this data must be recognised as existing; it must then be accepted as being of importance and relevance in consideration of decision or action.

There is a temptation to think that such data may not be important in comparison to critical meaning. Alternatives to SEU models of decision

behaviour have been developed that adopt a heuristic approach (for example, Soelberg 1967), but statistical tests in comparison to expectancy models have not been favourable (Sheridan, Richards, and Slocum 1975). However, this research has found that uncovering the basis and nature of transcendent meaning to be a complex process that is fraught with difficulty.

Not least is the difficulty that transcendent meaning will have an impact on action only to the extent that it relates to the individual's critical meaning. However, the basis of this connection is not in terms of the critical meaning directly related to the subject matter of the transcendent meaning, but in terms of the critical meaning that the individual holds concerning the referent other.

Unravelling the complexities of the means by which the influence of referent others has impact upon the action of an individual has formed the focus of the research outlined in this chapter. As a result, the discussion stops short of describing the nature of heuristic decision support systems that would cope with these difficulties such that tests would reflect more favourably on comparisons with SEU models. However, some tentative remarks are made concerning possible "alternative approaches" that might be used alongside SEU approaches to decision support.

Some Difficulties for Decision Support

The discussion begins with a consideration of the basic activity of decision support and the fundamental difficulties that are faced for any approach.

The motivation model of Lawler et al (1975) has been valuable in this study because the basis of decision support is the determination of the utility of

outcomes and the expectancy of achieving those valued outcomes. Whether one is considering cognitive or heuristic influences upon decision making, the first task is to identify the means-end network of constructs in the structure of "performance to outcome".

The primary difficulty in this is that of the accessibility of constructs. The meaning held by the individual is accessible to others for critical consideration largely to the extent that the individual is able to verbalize those constructs. Following Kelly (1963) more accurately, this will be the extent to which non-verbal construct held by the individual have "elements" that are verbal constructs which may be used to communicate similar meaning.

Stringer and Bannister (1977) suggest,

"To the extent that a person construes his own constructions of experience, he or she acquires consciousness. To the extent that a person construes his own processes of construction he acquires more complete awareness of himself as a person." (p53)

This is a form of "meta-construction", whereby the individual must construe his own construals. Firstly, of importance to an "objective" assessment, this may be inaccurate, and the individual may, for valid reason or ulterior motive, misunderstand or misconstrue his own activities.

Secondly, this form of meta-construction is not a necessary pre-requisite for effective construction, and therefore the individual may never attempt to construe large areas of his own construct system. Consequently, when questioned upon preferences there may be nothing and no way to respond. This may occur with a belief or value received from a referent other. Similarly,

experiences may provide constructs that contribute to "experiential meaning", but these constructs may never be given a linguistic tag.

As well as linguistic difficulties, there is another problem in that the individual may not have a determinable preference with respect to the situation under consideration. For example, one piece of research with college students to determine their preference for types of organization found that the SEU model was lacking when compared to a much simpler model, and led Sheard (1970) to suggest

"One possible explanation for the failure of the instrumentality-valence-goal model to provide improved prediction over the simpler instrumentality-sum is that the work goals of college juniors are not well enough established and integrated by the individual to provide a meaningful influence upon preferences among types of organization." (p248)

With these issues, the most basic assumptions concerning the identification of salience and centrality of particular values underlying the multiplicative expectancy models are brought into question. However, the problem is not specifically one of cognitive rather than heuristic, for if there is no preference then decision support is meaningless.

This problem is linked to the first problem in that the dependence of any approach upon constructs expressed in linguistic terms constrains the subject to the consideration of beliefs and values that are common to both model builder and model user(s). Particularly if the model is used with more than one subject, the pursuit of "intersubjectivity" (Popper 1974, Eden, Jones, Sims and Smithin 1981) may result in a focus upon values and beliefs

that have little importance to the actor or actors.

If consensus or group commitment is desired, as in the SODA approach (Eden 1988), then such a focus upon language is necessary. Indeed, it is this factor that leads Boothroyd (1984) to argue convincingly for consideration of the "Deliberative Context" as "a central view" for work in organizations. He suggests that, as a result,

"we can then turn on the one hand to our familiar approaches through scientific modelling and we can turn on the other hand to behavioural, social, and political concepts, but we shall remain clear that the contributions of both will derive from the practice of language and representation and that the contributions will be commissioned, conducted, included and rejected by the practice of language... The practice of language has many aspects, of which we might particularly note that it is used:

"to reflect and argue about what is, what is going to be, and what could be,

"to deliberate what to do,

"to persuade and to negotiate." (p³⁷)

Boothroyd's comments corroborate the style of consultation and facilitation proposed by Eden's SODA. However, Boothroyd's argument is that this should be "a central view", and this needs to be emphasised, for there is a wealth of meaning that cannot be represented in language.

The alternative forms of meaning may only be ignored at the risk of failing to capitalise on individual capacities that could be developed to personal

and organizational benefit. It is argued that such meanings can be the source of considerable motivation, commitment and energy, particularly in relation to acts that require risk or extreme effort and perseverance, acts that require the practice of faith.

However, it must be stated that although this dependence upon language is problematic, it does not make decision support meaningless in all situations, for most individuals have well developed construct systems that contain verbal constructs as elements through large parts of those systems.

Belief and Opinion

Language can play a role in critical and transcendent meaning. Language can represent non-verbal constructs held by the individual and be used in thought (critical meaning) and in influential communication (transcendent meaning). Dennett (1981) presents an argument concerning "the role of language in the difference between belief and opinion" that is of value to the discussion here. He suggests that

"Belief... is best considered divorced from language". (p305)

Based on the point of view of the "possible world theory" (Stalnaker 1976)

Dennett suggests that objects of belief

"have no syntax or structure", (p306)

given that

"objects of belief should be viewed as propositions". (p306)

Summarising what can be nothing less than a complex argument, beliefs are at a deeper level than opinions vis-a-vis action. Conversely, opinions, he argues, are fundamentally linked to language.

"Now why do we have opinions at all? And why do we have them while animals don't? Because we have language." (p306)

The implication here is that constructs as represented in language (verbal constructs) are "opinions" that have some connection with beliefs, but are not

"the beliefs and desires that predict... behaviour directly."
(p306)

This is significant in a number of respects. Firstly, if we are to use SEU approaches to decision support seeking to change or predict action then we must be aware of the "indirect" relationship between the opinions expressed in language and the action that might result. Dennett clarifies, suggesting that

"My opinions can be relied on to predict my behaviour only to the degree, normally large, that my opinions and beliefs are in rational correspondence...". (p306|7)

What, then, are opinions? Following Dennett again, opinions may be seen as

"true sentences that have been collected...We have a hunger for such items, which we add to our collections by ... a bet on truth alone, solely determined by epistemic desirabilities" (p304)

Our actions will follow our opinions to the extent that our opinions reflect our beliefs, which will concern our belief in referent others. Dennett argues that here lies the explanation of self-deception and akrasia (weakness of will). We may explain, by means of the opinions that we have collected, a rationale for our actions, but unless these espoused theories match our beliefs, the "real" us, there will be discrepancy between

rationale and action. Thus, we may accept a statement as true and thereby collect an opinion, but unless this either becomes a part of us as a belief (that is, the opinion is internalized) or the relationship with the source of the opinion continues and the referent other is aware of the actions of the actor, it will not affect action.

1) Opinions, Beliefs and Relationships

We may usefully apply this typology to the discussion of critical and transcendent meaning. Internalized beliefs are the substance of critical meaning. These may have verbal constructs, which according to Dennett should be considered as opinions, attached. Transcendent meaning, however, is made up of communicated constructs, the nature of opinions. Non-verbal "opinions" are communications which also contribute to transcendent meaning: this is the nature of experiential meaning. Thus critical meaning is made up of beliefs and opinions, transcendent merely of opinions. Transcendent meaning will have influence upon action to the extent that it links in to internalized beliefs concerning the referent other; that is, the attractiveness (critical meaning) to the individual.

Thus, the nature of transcendent meaning is such that it may lead to action based upon identification with the influence of an attractive other. Attraction to another and relationship are non-verbal constructs. In Dennett's terms relationship is a belief.

If an authority uses language to influence an individual then the result will be the communication of opinions, which according to Dennett are not directly related to action. Action, however, will arise through the link between the opinion-constructs of the influence and the belief-constructs of

the relationship. The verbal constructs will become elements of the beliefs that are held concerning the referent other.

Thus, action will be dependent upon beliefs that are not "situation-specific" but "person-specific". Powerfully, belief in others will be applicable to all types of situation, even entirely new and uncertain situations. This "belief in other" is known as "trust". If we are trusting then we may act in line with an opinion that we hold or that is given to us by another. This may apply to "self" as an authority, which is known as self-confidence.

2) The Transition from Opinions to Beliefs

Following Parsons (1965), who argues for a strong relationship between cathexis and cognizing, there is a strong relationship between transcendent and critical meaning. Opinions in transcendent meaning, once linked in to the actions of the individual through the beliefs concerning the referent other, may become internalized to become beliefs themselves. Opinions may become beliefs by the very act of acting upon the opinions. Thus, the opinion which is held and applied in one particular situation may then be applied in successive situations until it becomes intricately linked with that "type" of action, and the relationship between the opinion and action will become a more general applied one, that between belief and action.

The reason for applying this opinion in successive situations will however be different for different types of situation. For example, an opinion may be re-applied if the outcome is deemed successful and lends itself to being applied to different but similar situations. Mistakes can of course occur where opinions are reapplied in situations that are not in fact similar.

This may lead to potentially useful opinions being discarded. This is the picture of the "scientific approach".

Another example describes a conception of the "religious approach". That is, where an opinion is reapplied successively because of a meta-meaning to follow the "authority", the source of the "true sentence". Unless this meta-meaning is reversed, gradually a rationale of opinions will be generated supporting this opinion, which with successive application will develop into a belief system that guides action and may be rationally defended with a corresponding opinion system.

This is a foundation of the scientific approach because it embodies the persistence required to break new ground on the basis of "hunches". This is the notion of giving something a "fair trial" recognising the likelihood of misinterpretation of events that surround complex situations.

3) A Note on the relationship between Quantitative and Qualitative Data

This distinction between beliefs and opinions provides a way of thinking about the relationship between qualitative data and quantitative data.

Dennett comments,

"In some theories of belief... the belief that p is considered to admit of degree. One believes .9 that p and so believes .1 that not-p. Bayesian accounts have this feature, for instance. Other accounts of belief... treat belief as all or nothing. One believes flat out that p and hence disbelieves flat out that not-p... There ought to be no quarrel to adjudicate here, that the intuitions that support the latter variety of theory are

not to be dismissed or over-ridden by the intuitions that support the former. We should simply view the latter intuitions as about a different category of mental state, the state of assent, i.e., opinion, not belief." (p304)

This, if it should prove to be correct, poses some interesting questions in the issue of quantitative analysis in conjunction with cognitive maps (Eden, Smithin and Williams 1985). Maps, being language based, are constructed of opinions; a fact that is supported by the ease with which contradictory statements or arguments may be placed side by side. However, opinions are "all or nothing" and so any attempt at weighting the opinions will, in fact, be effective only to the extent that those opinions relate to the beliefs of the individual.

The difficulty in a cognitive map is in deciding what it is that should be quantified, given that the map will contain argumentation made up of a number of verbal constructs that are elements of single or fewer beliefs. How does one determine a representative quantity for each belief in contrast to other beliefs in order for the decision to be made? This cannot be confidently calculated by the nature and number of opinions concerning a particular topic because certain beliefs may be more easily expressed verbally (for example, those fitting more with organizational/cultural scripts (Mangham 1978)) than others (for example, values for which "I can't say why it's better - it just is" (Eden, Jones and Sims 1979)). This also puts an interesting question mark against techniques such as Saaty's analytic hierarchy process (Saaty 1985, see for example Belton and Gear 1981) or Multi-Criteria Analysis (Phillips 1982) to the extent that the analysis is dependent upon the opinions rather than beliefs.

However, the picture is not as gloomy as this difficulty with quantitative analysis may suggest. Quantification provides critical analysis, contributing to critical meaning. However, in a social situation there is other valuable meaning available for each individual in the wisdom and experience of others. This is transcendent meaning, for which opinions are an ideal medium of communication.

This describes a fundamental strength of mapping, which focuses upon the job of "collecting opinions". Transcendent meaning is the provision of alternative meaning, new ideas for valued goals or means of achieving goals. These ideas may be tried or not; Eden (1988) suggests that all constructs are options. This fits with Dennett's argument that opinions are either "p" or "not-p", they do not permit of degree.

Differentiating Higher Order and Lower Order Beliefs

The discussion so far has led to a developing understanding of the differences between critical and transcendent meaning. Some work by Bem (1970) provides further insight into the nature of transcendent meaning. This will be used to lead on to a discussion of the nature of Decision Support Systems that incorporate consideration of non- cognitive meaning.

It has been argued that important values are the foundation of the practice of faith: the individual will be motivated to act only if she cares, if the activity is important enough. It is suggested that these values may be internalized and contribute to critical meaning. Other valued constructs may be accepted through identification, resulting from social influences that contribute to "transcendent meaning".

Values are a particular form of belief, and therefore a part of a wider belief system for every individual (Eden, Jones, and Sims 1979). Consequently, any general statements that can be made concerning the nature of beliefs and belief systems will apply to a consideration of values. The basis for a distinction between heuristic and SEU models of decision behaviour is that it is possible to distinguish between different "orders" or types of belief.

Bem (1970) distinguishes between three categories of belief: zero order, first order, and higher order beliefs. First order beliefs are simple and relatively fundamental, such as "oranges are round". Zero order beliefs are sub-conscious in that they are rarely considered by the individual. However, they underpin first order beliefs, comprising "our faith in the validity of our sensory experience." Bem argues further that the word of an authority can also underpin a first order belief:

"First order beliefs based upon a zero order belief in the credibility of an external authority are functionally no different from first order beliefs based upon an axiomatic belief in the credibility of our senses." (p7)

"Transcendent" and "experiential meaning" are the source of such beliefs; transcendent dependent upon "the credibility of an external authority" and experiential upon "the credibility of our senses". Zero and first order beliefs are most obvious in children:

"Although we hold primitive beliefs throughout our lives, we learn as we leave childhood behind us to regard our sensory experiences as potentially fallible and similarly learn to be more cautious in believing external authorities." (p10)

More prevalent in adult life are higher order beliefs each of which

"... has a vertical structure of beliefs underneath it, beliefs which "generate" it as the product of quasi- logical inference...When a belief has a deep vertical structure it is said to be highly elaborated or differentiated; to the extent that it has little or no syllogistic reasoning underneath it, it is said to be unelaborated or undifferentiated. A primitive belief is, by definition, completely undifferentiated." (p10/11)

Higher order beliefs can also have a developed "horizontal" structure, with more than one vertical chain of argument or reasoning underneath it. This is the nature of critical meaning as held by the individual.

This vertical and horizontal structure of higher order beliefs is demonstrated well in the "cognitive map", a model of individual cognitions that forms a central part of Eden's SODA approach (1988).

It is for this category of higher order beliefs that SEU models of decision behaviour are appropriate: where value-beliefs are well integrated into the belief system of the decision maker. Heuristic models are necessary for consideration of the lower order beliefs, that derive from transcendent and experiential meaning.

Cognitive Centrality

One of the difficulties found when using cognitive mapping as a decision aiding tool has been coping with the complexity of the construct system to be able to get at the root of the problem or "heart of the issue", as it has been termed (Eden, Smithin and Williams 1985). An important distinction to

be made is between the quantity and the importance of constructs in the belief system. The differentiated network of beliefs (higher order beliefs) may constitute the bulk of the constructs, but undifferentiated beliefs (lower order) could be more important to the individual.

One of the theoretical conceptions used in the analysis of cognitive maps has been the notion of cognitive centrality: an attempt to assess the constructs that are most important to the decision maker with respect to the issues concerned. This has been attempted by means of various mathematical analyses of the construct network, for example determining those constructs with most constructs underneath.

However, like SEU models, such analyses may not be able to capture those beliefs that are not differentiated; that is if they are primitive, the result of sensory experience or based upon the credibility of an external authority. Bem argues that

"many of our primitive beliefs are very central in our belief systems... Also... most of our religious and philosophical beliefs are primitive first order beliefs upon which many of our other beliefs are built." (p12)

These "foundational beliefs" serve the function of providing a stability and security to the beliefs that stem from them. For the individual believing in sensory experiences, that security will be in the certainty of what has been seen. An example of the power and prevalence of this in adults is given by the cognitive bias brought about by "vivid images", such as the perceived expected likelihood of dying in a plane crash or some such dramatic event. Eiser and Pligt (1988) suggest that

"Risks from more easily pictured accidents, such as explosions, may contribute more to the judgement that a particular industrial process is dangerous, even though they may happen extremely rarely, than may continuous and cumulative hazards, such as routine emissions into the atmosphere, which have less immediate, dramatic effects". (p 90)

Alternatively, central beliefs may come directly from referent others, and for the individual believing in an external authority the security rests in the supporting or informing relationship of this other person or group. For example, Slovic, Fischhoff and Lichtenstein (1979) were able to demonstrate a significant relationship between the importance attributed to a particular phenomenon by an "authority figure" (a Newspaper) and the importance attributed by the individual. Their research noted this relationship between newspaper column space devoted to a cause of death and a subject's subjective estimates of its likelihood.

Values and "Attitudinal Centrality"

Even if linguistic tags have been attached to the primitive beliefs, problems exist in their identification because, for example, if they exist as relatively independent beliefs, with little or no syllogistic reasoning underneath, then expressing those beliefs to an interviewer or researcher could prove socially problematic.

Eden et al (1979) addressed the nature of values, and suggested

"The following we felt to be critical features:

- (i) can't say why it's better - it just is
- (ii) internalized
- (iii) commitment.

These were considered difficult to operationalize." (p38)

The description "can't say why it's better - it just is" captures the dilemma that faces the individual decision maker attempting to justify to another acting upon primitive beliefs or values.

This feature and the features of internalization and commitment are seen to be of particular significance in a consideration of the practice of faith. The fact that these are "difficult to operationalize" has contributed to the philosophical nature of this thesis, as the underlying issues have been explored. For this reason, the study undertaken does not hope to make more than a beginning to addressing the problem of generating a heuristic model of decision behaviour.

1. Values and Primitive Beliefs

There are some interesting connections that can be made with respect to Bem's orders of beliefs and Eden's "feelings" concerning values. Firstly, it is important to note that Eden was talking specifically about "values" rather than "zero or first order beliefs", but the similarity in description is marked. "Can't say why it's better - it just it" reflects Bem's description of primitive beliefs as "unelaborated or undifferentiated". However, Eden argues that these "values" are "internalized". If he is following Kelman's (1961) use of the term, then one is considering a construct that fits well with the existing construct system. This is an interesting quality for a belief that is unelaborated. Further, Eden notes the link to commitment, a fundamental prerequisite for action.

The implications are that, although not all primitive beliefs can be called values, values appear to have the characteristics of primitive rather than higher order beliefs: they are the result of social or environmental

influence, through authority figures or experiences of the senses. Values are socially or experientially defined.

This would suggest an even stronger argument for the differentiation between critical, transcendent and experiential meaning. That is, if values are fundamentally primitive beliefs, then analysis that takes the form of language based SEU approaches will tend to miss values to the extent that they have not yet been verbalized or differentiated. It could be for this reason that Eden et al considered the critical features of values difficult to operationalize.

A further complicating factor is a recognition that it is not a question of either heuristic or SEU, but of both. If the practice of faith involves the process suggested here, then it does not occur in isolation, but as an integral part of the cognitions and actions of the individual. As was indicated in the last chapter, Eden's SODA approach evidences an appreciation of the arguments suggested here, that a purely cognitive SEU approach to aiding or understanding the decision process is inadequate. Eden consequently encourages "consensus rather than compromise" and "commitment rather than agreement".

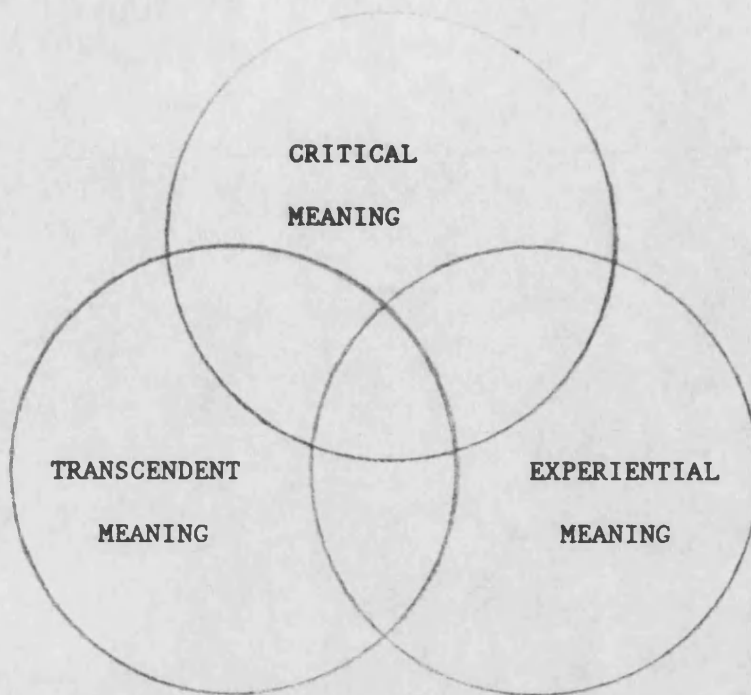
2. Action arises from Attitudinal Centrality

It has already been suggested that approaches to decision support can face problems where certain beliefs or values do not have linguistic tags. These, as well as the supporting primitive beliefs, will be omitted from the critical analysis. For both types of omission this is serious because entire "clusters", or groups of constructs, will be absent from the analysis. As a consequence of the ready availability of the cognitive component, but the

more difficult access to affective or behavioural components, two out of the three components of attitude will be given scant consideration. The relationship between critical meaning and transcendent and experiential meaning merits further comment.

In representing this distinction between higher order and primitive beliefs, it is necessary to consider the nature of the relationship between the two. Given time, an individual may develop a network of argument for a primitive belief. For example, if a belief is central to the individual, is it central because of the cognitive network supporting it, or is it central because of previous sensory experiences or external authorities? Practically, in most cases this probably does not matter. Methodologically it is most helpful if it is possible to assess the effect of primitive beliefs before the cognitive network is developed. However, this problem does bring to the fore the question of "What do we mean by "centrality?".

It is proposed here that the fundamental measure of centrality must be not "cognitive centrality" (Nozicka et al 1976) but "attitudinal centrality". It was noted in chapter 3 that Kiesler (1971) suggests that attitudes have three components: the affective component (feelings), the cognitive component (thoughts), and the behavioural component (predisposition to act). This parallels with the model of meaning



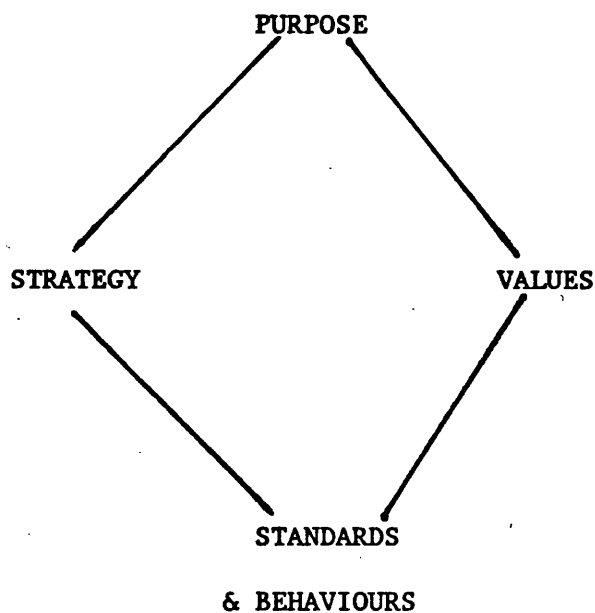
Action arises out of all three forms of meaning, not just critical, or cognitive, meaning. This would fit with the underlying philosophy of cognitive mapping which stems from Personal Construct Theory. Kelly (1963) argues that constructs are not merely cognitive, but may also be non-verbal, such as feelings or acts. Considered as such, cognitive centrality will be a significant, but not necessarily dominant, part of the centrality of particular beliefs and values. In supporting the decision making of an individual there is a need to cater to the whole construct system, thereby moving towards an awareness of "central attitudes" from which action may arise.

Alternative Approaches

Having outlined an argument for an "awareness" and "acceptance of validity" of data that consists of primitive beliefs, it is necessary to at least begin to speculate upon the nature of approaches that may facilitate the determination of development or ideas around "attitudinal centrality".

This has not been the primary purpose of this research which is addressing the question "What is faith?", and so the comments here can be little more than "informed intuitions". However, it is fitting to make some attempt in order to further an understanding of the phenomena with which we are dealing. The comments will be based upon two approaches, the first by Campbell (1989), the second by Bull (1989).

Campbell's research, concentrating predominantly on high performing companies in the UK, focuses on the role of a "sense of mission". The model that he uses indicates the similarity between his ideas and those of this thesis:



This simple model, which outlines the fundamental aspects of his approach, suggests that companies with a "sense of mission" have a "purpose", and that purpose is set and reached through "values" and "strategy" respectively: it is from strongly held values that purpose derives, and it is through strategy that the purpose is attained. Campbell argues that the primary

difference between successful companies with strongly held values and less successful companies with strongly held values is that

"In successful companies, values and strategy "resonate"."

By this I think Campbell is referring to a "richness" of strategy that matches with the "richness" in the values. At one level, one might argue that there is a direct comparison with a balance between "strong primitive beliefs" and "strong higher order beliefs", strategy being the working out of the detail of "what to do" in a "rigorous, systematic fashion", as we have seen to be characteristic of a SEU approach to decision support. In terms of the model developed in this paper, there is a "resonance" between "critical meaning" and "transcendent and experiential meaning".

Concerning an approach that joins higher order beliefs (SEU) and primitive beliefs, Campbell's final element in his model is of interest: "Standards and Behaviours". Campbell argues that one of the difficulties is that

"Values are so subtle",

they are difficult to put your finger on. This fits with the description of "values as primitive beliefs" that is being suggested here.

His observation has been that successful companies "ground" their values in particular, simple, easily comprehensible and communicable standards or behaviours. For example, Hewlett Packard have "grounded" their value-rich management philosophy in the behaviour of "management by walking about". Similarly, Inkson et al (1987) in their "Theory K" research cite A J Martin, a "successful company" in New Zealand as flying the value "Kite" of a high quality customer service that says "We'll put it right, And it's the putting right that counts!". This simple embodiment of a rich philosophy of the

importance of good customer service extended to one worker proudly recounting the story of how he replaced a customer's faulty video machine on Christmas day: a lovely example of a potentially subtle value being firmly grounded in action.

Both of these are examples of straightforward, easily understandable practice which communicates the values AND serves as an effective element of strategy. It does not require a well-developed rationale, provided that those practising the behaviour choose to accept the "authority" of the source of the values.

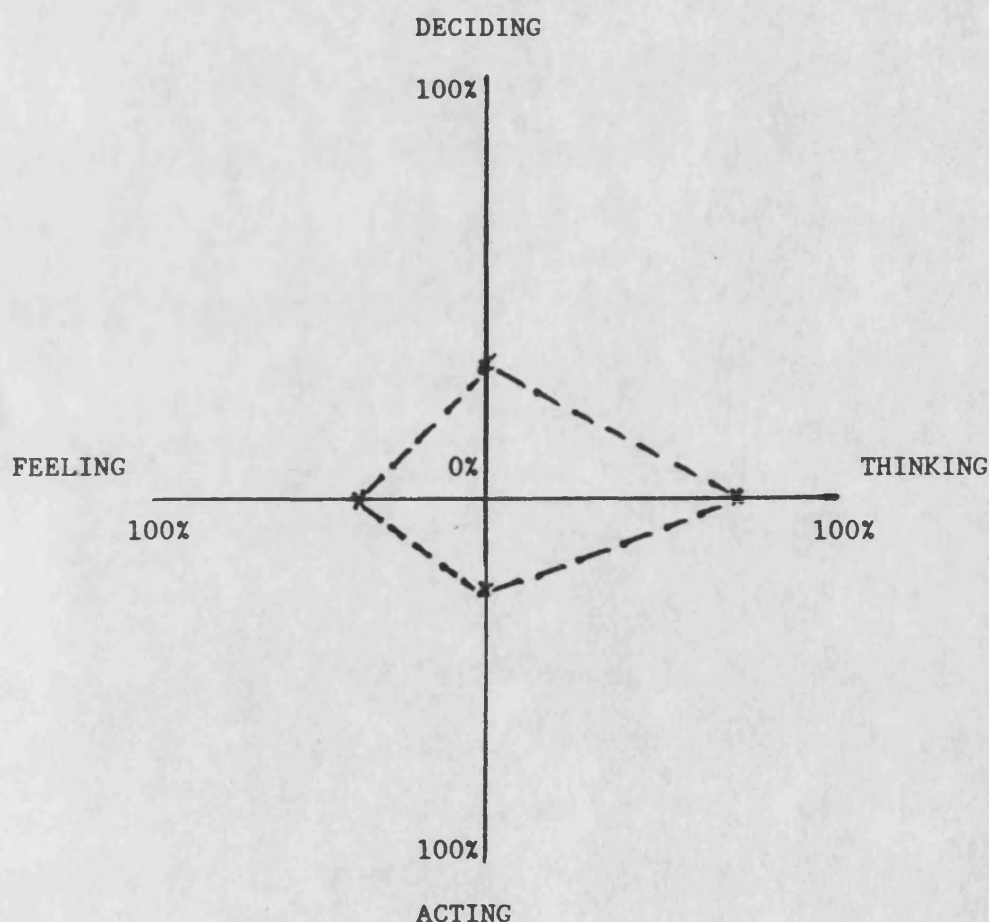
The similarity between this and, for example, the Ten Commandments is marked, where a set of philosophically profound values are expressed in a relatively straightforward, easy to understand set of codes and practices.

Eden's work has also developed in this direction over recent years as he has moved towards a differentiation between three levels in a hierarchy within the cognitive map: Goals, Strategic Options and Actions (1988). In the same way as Campbell, the long-term goals may be seen as "grounded" in the practicalities of immediately operational actions. The mechanism of seeking consensus and commitment is dependent upon notions of trust in model co-builders rather than extensive elaboration of beliefs and argument: each of the participants is not expected to understand the entirety of the philosophy, but to appreciate and accept the aspects that are of relevance individually. This is the nature of "transcendent meaning".

The second approach, by way of illustration, is focused on "leadership training", by Bull (1989). It has been mooted that faith is strongly linked

to entrepreneurial leadership and so this approach is again of direct relevance to this thesis, although the relationship is perhaps not as apparent as with Campbell's work.

My comments here are based primarily upon a workshop that I attended rather than upon the accompanying paper. It is difficult to give an accurate picture of the session because it was not so much what was said as what was done that was significant. The central thesis was that "All are leaders - some are merely inhibited by previous conditioning experiences". He also had a simple model to express this which identified four abilities that would all be at 100% in the entirely uninhibited individual:



An individual's "profile" may look something like the diagram. Bull argued that as a result of conditioning individuals have "limits" in their abilities to "think", to "feel", to "act", and/or to "decide", and to increase leadership capabilities these limits need to be pushed outwards.

In demonstration of one of the methods he employs on leadership training workshops at ICI, Bull directed/"gave" the attention of all in the room (50 people) to a (brave) volunteer.

"The next ten minutes is yours; all of the people in this room are here for you."

He then proceeded to ask little more than

"How does it feel?".

After a variety of non-verbals, including shuffling feet and turning away from the "audience", the volunteer responded,

"I have a block".

To be fair to Bull, he was obviously doing a good deal more than I have implied because in a group of 50 strangers he had served to create an atmosphere of safety, trust and (it appeared) genuine care. By the end of the demonstration the volunteer was not the only one to have shed a few tears. I came away feeling uncomfortable because I was not too sure what it was I had just experienced (it was very new to me in such an environment) but I also felt that I had witnessed something powerful and positive.

The response of the "audience" was predominantly "experiential". I came away troubled because I had not understood the events, but excited by the power. However, this experiential meaning was merged with transcendent meaning

derived from a confidence in Bull. Alongside the power, Bull, through the medium of trust, had somehow tapped into the feelings of not only the volunteer, but also most others in the room as well.

The development of ideas on "experiential meaning" will be left until the next chapter, but it is worth noting that the "raw power" of this form of activity is potentially the greatest influence upon action in the short-term of all three sources of meaning. The caution is that this power seems to be less directed or controllable. However, in combination with critical and transcendent meaning it appears that the potential for powerful action is great. My intuition is that great acts of faith will occur in individuals where there is a "resonance" (a la Campbell) in all three areas of meaning.

The rest of this chapter discusses some of the data that has served to generate this consideration of "transcendent meaning", demonstrating its importance for John and Pat in their committed practice of faith.

God as John and Pat's Authority

The story so far has told how John and Pat had developed a caring attitude towards underprivileged young people. This was evidenced in John and Pat's commitment to working with youth clubs and individuals with particular needs. This care, and other circumstances such as Pat's illness and John's unhappiness in his work, combined with an opportunity in the form of an invitation from the Rev Graham Giles to run the youth work at his church in Saltash near Plymouth, had led John and Pat to move from Southampton to the West Country.

However, circumstances had not been kind: Pat's health had worsened in what

they experienced to be a cold, damp climate during their first winter; John's job had led to further disappointment, nearly pushing John towards a nervous breakdown. The straw that seemed to break the camel's back was that John and Pat did not feel wanted in the church youth work.

Pat, in particular, channelled her energies into working at Crossline, the Christian counselling organization. There John and Pat found a group of like-minded Christians who were also at the "social services end" of the Christian spectrum. These people were also similar to John and Pat in experimenting in the growing "charismatic" involvement within the nation-wide church. This involved an expectancy of God as a real and present influence upon everyday life, such that miracles of financial provision or physical healing were deemed a tangible possibility, even if bona fide examples were hard to come by. The major source of evidence for these beliefs were national Christian figures, of whom Colin Urquhart has already been mentioned. However, to an extent all, or at least most, had some "testimony" of the "hand of God on their lives", in providing money at a time when it was most needed, or in physical healing of pains or aches. Some stories were more impressive than others.

Despite their changing Christian faith, John and Pat tell of this period as a predominantly sad time. However, the development of the influence of God in their lives became more and more evident, such that in succeeding years little of their lives would be interpreted without consideration of the part that God was playing. Transcendent meaning began to grow.

The importance of God as an authority figure is emphasised by Pat, who interprets this period of considerable pain and anxiety in a manner that

fits with the sense of purpose that they were only later to develop. Pat suggests that,

"There was a period of time when God said, "You have to come under my will"... the first six months in Plymouth."

Pat's illness was a significant part in this process, and again with a particular interpretation that asserted the authority of God over their lives:

"I wanted to be healed so that I could keep my job on... but God wanted me to give up my will to him."

This was a process that took a long time. Pat's values concerned her work to which she was prevented from returning by her illness. Pat seems to be describing a "battle of wills", in one sense between her and God, but in a more important sense within herself. On one side the desires that she had concerning valued goals of work, desires that were "internalized", strongly built into her way of thinking, and on the other side her attraction to God and the desire to identify with the values that she heard or felt God espoused. If this were not so, there would have been no battle: she would merely have become frustrated with her condition.

The process of inner conflict was painful, intermingled so closely with the pain and frustration of her disability:

"I was constantly tired, constantly exhausted [John: "constantly incapable."] Yes. That sort of thing leads to depression, really. I said to God, "I've struggled and I've tried and I've got absolutely nowhere so unless you do something with me I'll have to stay like this and give up any idea of being anything."

And I'd actually reached the point of saying "Your will be done". It sounds terribly spiritual, but I'd been through fifteen months of severe hassle over it... I mean it had taken me a long time to come to that point because I was terribly active and then I couldn't be."

There are two ways in which this may be interpreted. The first, which equates with the pain and exhaustion of Pat's experience, suggests an unpleasant confrontational situation that "Pat lost". However, there is another way of interpreting this experience.

The strength of the argument about to be put forward is weakened by the nature of the data. However, given the extent to which it "fits" with the rest of the argument of this thesis gives greater credence as the better, or more helpful, interpretation.

The data is weakened because Pat's comment is taken from the period after she had experienced the healing of her legs and the disappearance of the pain. Consequently, when she says she "reached the point of saying, "Your will be done"", it is difficult to be sure whether this was an identifiable point, or whether it was a description of the trend of her thought. More problematic would be if it were an entirely fabricated, idealized interpretation of events that fitted with Pat's theology of submission to God as a necessary prerequisite for healing to occur. This, as I have said, is the weakness of the data.

Given this caution, my preferred assumption is that of the second interpretation: not a single point, but a general "movement" towards an

alternative viewpoint. Such an occurrence could be interpreted using the model of motivation that stresses the need for:

a Valued Outcome, V

a belief that performance will lead to the outcome, $(P \rightarrow O)$

and a belief that Effort will lead to that Performance, $(E \rightarrow P)$.

Pat gradually became less motivated to consider her return to work as her health deteriorated. To work would have satisfied her value of "being something", "doing something worthwhile", $(P \rightarrow O)$, but she was unable to work [$(E \rightarrow P) = 0$]. Conversely, her will to identify with God depended upon God's ability rather than Pat's ability; a more tenable belief given the circumstances as any belief greater than zero would have been sufficient. In this circumstance, all three factors were positive, V , $(P \rightarrow O)$ and $(E \rightarrow P)$. The situation was more a question of finally accepting that only one of the options was tenable: Pat could do nothing but accept that concentrating on "working with God" was the only thing that would work. The battle was in accepting and coming to terms with the belief that she could not work.

The situation had conspired to place Pat in a dependent position. This was unpleasant and painful for her, but at least it satisfied some of her values. Her belief that God would act with her $(E \rightarrow P)$, although perhaps small, left room for hope. God had become Pat's authority.

In the next chapter the story of Pat's healing is told, for whilst at a Christian Bible Week Pat had an experience of the power of God which removed her pain and restored her mobility to such an extent that she was able to work again (not to mention, play badminton!). An explanation of the mechanism for this healing is not attempted in this thesis, but given the

argument above concerning Pat's belief in God, and absence of belief in herself, the notion of expectancy may be a significant element. John recalled that at the Bible Week the social influence of the participants was strong and,

"There was a sense all week that God was going to move."

This period of time did, as Pat argues, lead to them "coming under God's will" in that God became, in a more profound way than ever before, an authority figure to them.

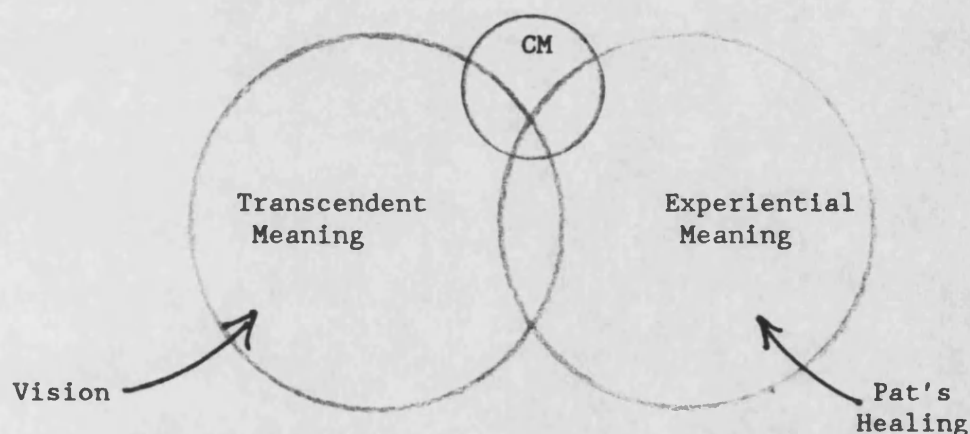
Through the experience of Pat's healing, John and Pat's belief in God's ability to work in their lives (E-->P) increased: this influential God was no longer merely a great idea, but they now had powerful evidence to confirm what they had thought.

During the following summer, Pat had a recurring vision. Since her healing she had had a growing conviction that she had been healed for a purpose greater than merely removing the pain that she had been suffering. This conviction of a sense of purpose was accompanied by repeatedly receiving a vision that Pat believes was from God. This vision was of John and Pat standing outside of a large building, and between them stood one of their old youth club members: a young man, called Shane, who had become a Christian as a result of their work in Southampton.

They believed that this was God suggesting that they establish a residential house, just as they had dreamed of in Southampton. In terms of motivation to act, all of the criteria were present: a valued goal, V, ability, (E-->P), and solution, (P-->O). The belief in themselves that they had lacked in

Southampton was replaced by a belief in God as their influential authority.

The way that John and Pat describe the strategy that developed in order to achieve their goal reflects this involvement of God. Initially they were a little reticent and had little idea of what to do. In terms of the model of meaning, the picture may be represented thus:



The small "critical meaning" left them feeling vulnerable and without a clear idea of what to do. They overcame this hurdle, or "lack of impetus", by conferring with respected others, such as Gordon. As time went on they believed that they received other "words from God" that gave them an idea of what strategy to adopt; firstly, selling their own home in Saltash and moving to Plymouth. John said at the time,

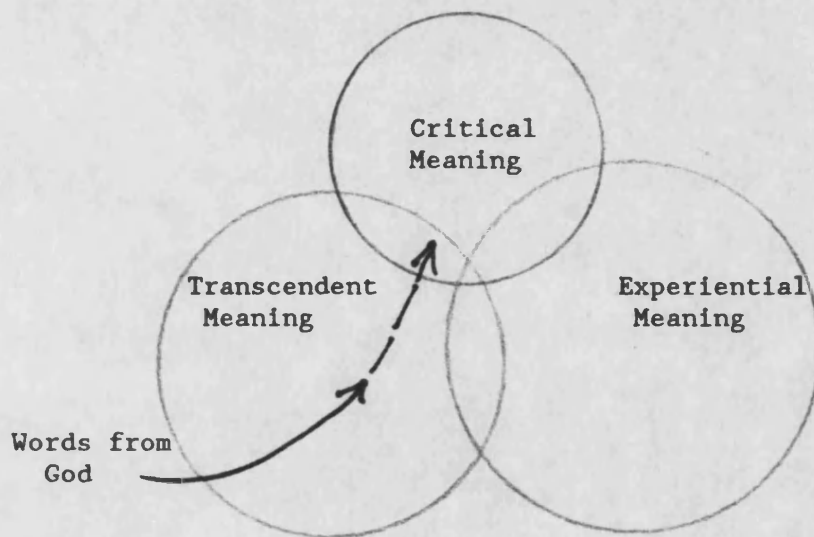
"The Lord has very clearly shown us that he wants us to sell the house; he very clearly wants us in Plymouth."

Later, Pat reflected on some of the difficulties of the "challenging", "risky" strategy that they believed God was encouraging them to adopt; for example, continuing to sell their home when their negotiations for a Guest

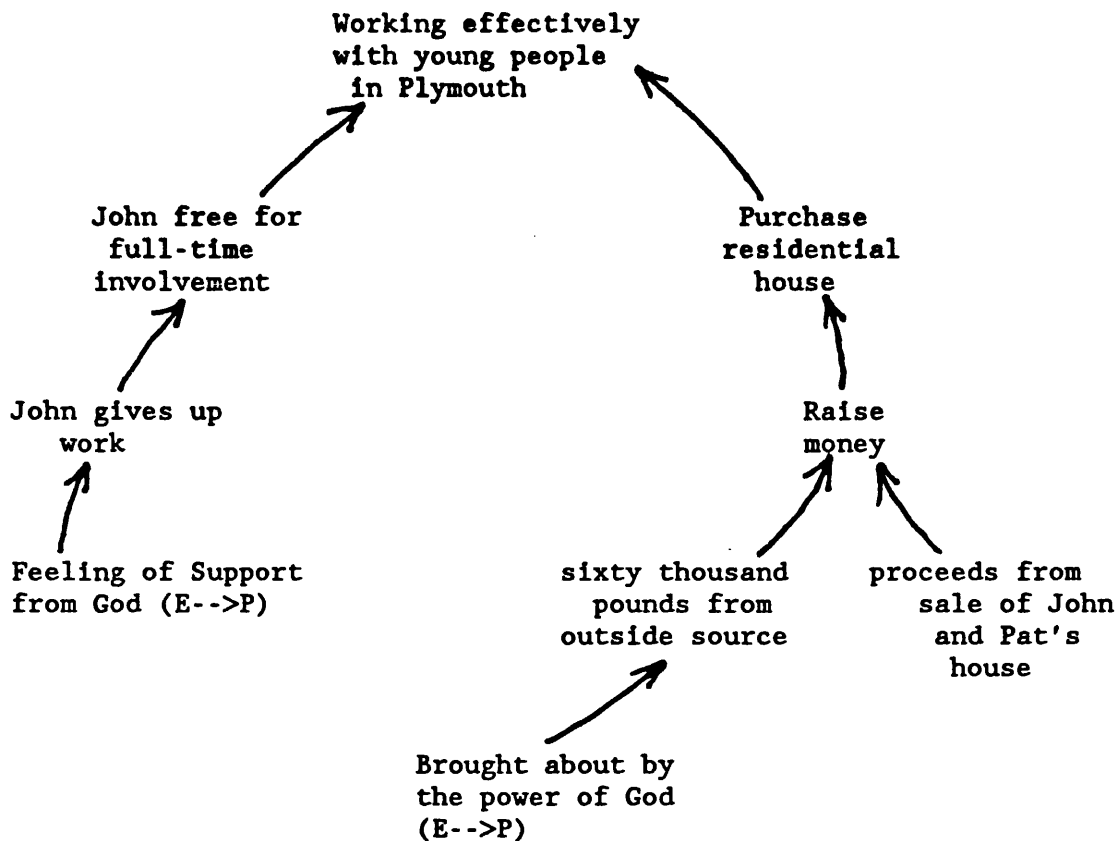
House fell through because of lack of finance:

"I think if there was one point that revealed what God was going to do with us it was the point that we realised that he wanted us to carry on and sell the house in Saltash but was not going to provide bigger premises there and then."

These rational strategies, which were received as from God, influenced transcendent and critical meaning:



Some of the central aspects of the critical meaning that they drew from these events can be summarised using a cognitive map:



Although this is a relatively basic representation of their thinking at this time, it is not entirely unrepresentative. There was a great simplicity to their approach, and when they took their steps of commitment, as recorded in later chapters, their understanding of what they would do to establish the house was relatively undeveloped. As has been argued in this chapter, their impetus to act came predominantly from the transcendent meaning that they received. Their critical meaning was little more than an interpretation of this received meaning.

One assumption that was prevalent in their thinking, recorded on the cognitive map above, was that some "outside body", like a Christian organization, would provide them with the necessary finance. This proved to be entirely inaccurate, and a source of a great deal of frustration and

worry to them. It was not until nearly two years later that an organization appeared that would be prepared to provide the necessary backing.

In summary, John and Pat consistently identified God as the source of most important meaning in their practice of faith. For example, reflecting upon the whole experience of practising faith, Pat commented,

"The greatest lesson has been to trust in God... Now we are prepared to say at the beginning, "What has God got to say?"."

and at a different time,

"I think God has used these two years (1984/5) in growth and development...

"The Lord has also given us a different set of priorities over the last two years. In the world's sense they are upside-down..."

Summary

Transcendent Meaning

The need for alternative approaches to decision support has been recognised as a result of the perceived limitations of SEU approaches. However, heuristic models have been tried and generally found to compare unfavourably with SEU approaches. The aim of this chapter was to explore some of the complexities underlying the problem with heuristic approaches, identifying areas for consideration.

This was begun by exploring some of the underlying difficulties for any practice of decision support, whether using SEU or heuristic models. The problem of the accessibility of constructs was discussed. Language was

identified as a key factor in this, and it was noted that some important constructs may not be readily communicated via language.

It was argued that action will arise out of non-verbal, internalized beliefs rather than verbal "opinions", and so the relationship between these beliefs and opinions was discussed. It was argued that the influence of referent others, in the form of communicated opinions, will be effectual in leading to modified action to the extent that the construed relationship is supportive. This can lead to the development of primitive beliefs from opinions.

The discussion then proceeded to cover the fact that values are primitive beliefs, socially defined and rooted in affective and behavioural components of attitude. SEU approaches to decision support concentrate upon higher order beliefs which are based upon "quasi- logical inference". Alternative approaches would need to focus upon less logical means of determining validity, for example the shared construal of valued goals or experience. Two approaches were briefly considered which focused upon values and trusting relationships. These are two prominent characteristics of transcendent meaning.

John and Pat's relationship with God as their referent authority was described as instrumental in providing a growing sense of purpose at a time when their own confidence was decreasing. This led to the increasing effect of two forms of primitive belief in influencing their actions: those beliefs that came from God's attribution of importance to certain acts (valued goals) notably the act of establishing a house, and those beliefs that came from God's support in suggesting a capacity (power) to achieve those valued

goals. It seems to have been relevant that John and Pat already valued the goals that God encouraged them to pursue, making it easier for the meaning to be accepted and internalized.

Their relationship with God thus provided John and Pat with transcendent meaning that merged with their critical meaning, providing new confidence in their ability to succeed. An important contribution to this transcendent meaning came from particular experiential meaning, discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 7

ACTION ARISES OUT OF EXPERIENTIAL MEANING

There is powerful meaning to be drawn from the experience of the senses: with no dependence upon congruence with current values or upon the existence of a long-term relationship, with no basis other than the experience of a force. This is experiential meaning, which can be appealing or frightening to the individual and have a significant influence upon behaviour.

The experiential meaning that is of particular interest in the practice of faith is that which can be interpreted as demonstrating the power of a referent other. Thus, experiential meaning does not lead directly to faith, but may support the primitive beliefs that derive from transcendent meaning.

Contrast

Kelly (1963) suggests that contrast and similarity form the basis for "construing" where

"a person places an interpretation upon what is construed. He erects a structure, within the framework of which the substance takes shape or assumes meaning." (p50)

Meaning has been used in this thesis to refer to the beliefs or constructs of the individual that are the means by which an individual attributes meaning to events. The type of belief that is a "value" has been argued to

be of significance for meaning that will lead to action. Thus, meaning is the construction of the individual. The basis of these constructs is similarity or contrast.

"An albino cat in a snow storm" or "a black dog in a coal bunker" are amusing interpretations of a blank white sheet or a plain dark picture, but generally such images stimulate little meaning because of an absence of contrast. All meaning that an individual holds will have arisen from the awareness that is brought about by contrast.

Experiential meaning, of all three types of meaning, is most obviously and simply derived from this principle of contrast. Experiential meaning derives from the experience of something "outside of self", via the senses, to stimulate the process of forming constructs.

Lyons (1969) distinguishes between three different kinds of 'oppositeness': antonymy, complementarity, and converseness. Complementarity (e.g. single:married, male:female) and converseness (e.g. buy and sell, husband and wife) are argued to be less significant than antonymy (e.g. big and small, short and long). Of note

"It is characteristic of antonyms of this class, 'opposites' par excellence, that they are regularly gradable. Grading (in the sense in which the term is being employed here...) is bound up with the operation of comparison. The comparison may be explicit or implicit..." (p463)

Experiential meaning is concerned with antonyms, with simple cases of "oppositeness" in the gradable sense: "this is soft" (rather than hard),

"that's amazing" (rather than ordinary), "it was unusual" (rather than the norm). Big and small, long and short, soft and hard, amazing and ordinary, all may be graded, either by means of a system of measurement or probabilistic estimate. The important factor with respect to meaning that Lyons argues makes antonyms more significant is that there is a simplicity to the constructs. Complementary or converse constructs require a relatively developed network of understanding in order to appreciate their meaning. For example, to be "single or married" requires an appreciation of the legal, social and religious norms of society; "buy and sell" has meaning only within the context of commerce. Big and small, short or long requires a much simpler level of context, and they may be experienced directly through the senses with limited abstract construction.

The result can be that antonyms give a 'strongly opposite' picture that is vivid. Lyons suggests that the 'synergy' will be greater for antonyms than for complementary or converse opposites. The reason for this is in the very nature of antonyms. Lyons argues further that

"Many pseudo-problems have arisen in logic and philosophy as a consequence of the failure to appreciate that such words as big and small, or good and bad, do not refer to independent 'opposite' qualities, but are merely lexical devices for grading as 'more than' or 'less than' with respect to some implicit norm." (p465)

That is, antonyms may be used to represent something that is different from the "norm", something that is "out of the ordinary". This is the basis of the power of experiential meaning: it will take our attention because the event is unusual.

The process of scientific discovery can often be seen as artificially generating such occurrences in order to demonstrate particular phenomena as "distinct from" other possible, or normal ways of viewing the events or occurrences. For example, the discovery that water will boil at a higher temperature under greater atmospheric pressure, lower temperature under lesser pressure, is an exciting experiment for the young physicist who has been taught through childhood that water boils at one hundred degrees centigrade: the implicit norms, of atmospheric pressure, can be challenged to provide new meaning, and with new meaning come new opportunities.

In this context, Kiesler (1971) notes that it is possible to differentiate

"... between naturally occurring behavioural units and behaviour tesserae. A behavioural unit is a naturally occurring segment of behaviour, part of the ordinary stream. Behaviour tesserae are artificial pieces or bits of behaviour that are selected or instigated by an investigator and are a consequence of research methods which cut off or isolate a segment of behaviour from its place in a naturally occurring stream... Any behaviour produced in the laboratory is cut off and bounded from the ongoing stream of behaviour... Being cut off and bounded, small behaviours in the laboratory are likely to have a more powerful effect than they would if they were immersed in an ongoing stream. Behaviour in the stream is much more fluid, lending itself less readily to interpretation by the performer and demanding less of his attention. Outside of the laboratory one needs a much larger difference in the independent variable to affect the comparable difference in the dependent variable." (p44 (5))

The scientist has great power to develop meaning in the laboratory if it is possible to control the stream of behaviour, isolating "behaviour tesserae". However, large differences, strongly contrasting "poles" of an antonym, can have a similar effect in influencing meaning outside of the laboratory. For example Scharfstein (1980) refers to "axiomatic experiences" as being of critical importance in changes of life:

"... any powerful experience can lead to or, in effect, constitute the conviction on which a whole philosophy is based. Such a conviction serves as a metaphysical assumption; but the word, 'assumption', is inadequate to it, for unless it is displaced by an equally powerful experience, the philosopher or scientist who has accepted it can hardly reject it, and I should therefore prefer to speak of an 'axiomatic experience' or 'experiential axiom'." (p 10/11)

For example, he cites Rousseau who experienced a time when "his mind was dazzled and confusing, inexpressibly disturbing crowds of ideas thronged into his mind." Rousseau, himself, wrote of the occurrence

"Unable to continue breathing while walking, I let myself fall under one of the trees of the avenue, and I passed half an hour there in such agitation that when I got up I saw the whole front of my vest wet with the tears I had not felt myself shedding... All I could retain of those crowds of great truths which, in a quarter of an hour, illuminated me under that tree has been feebly distributed in my three principle writings..." (p12)

Scharfstein observes that "It is hard for those of us who are not subject to such sudden awakenings or conversions to believe those who are." Although we

may not be able to accept the construction or interpretation of the individual involved, this is not important, except insofar as we are able believe that the experience of such events can be significant in determining meaning for the individual. Even if we cannot believe the experience "as told", at least we may believe that, if the individual interprets it as such then it will influence behaviour, and "if a situation is defined as real it will be real in its consequences" (Thomas 1928).

This is important if we wish to understand the actions of others, and thereby encourage or develop an ability to work with these others. Furthermore, if there is great power to influence action, if there is great "synergy", in these antonyms then it is perhaps worth considering how these principles might be applied to decision support, the building of consensus and commitment, or any other factor that is deemed important for organizational development.

These axiomatic experiences can lead to what Bem (1970) called primitive beliefs that may form the philosophical and religious beliefs upon which other, higher order, beliefs are then built. This type of event can therefore have an initially peripheral and transitory effect upon the life of the individual whilst later coming to be of profound importance in the development of meaning. This is the picture that is developed in the later consideration of the axiomatic experiences of John and Pat.

A Phenomenological Model

Apter (1982) argues that a phenomenological approach is essential to appreciate the logic underlying what has here been called experiential meaning. An understanding of aspects of Apter's model will help to

illuminate the arguments in this chapter concerning the importance of contrast and meaning in motivating the individual.

Apter argues that the link between these experiences and the motivation to act, termed "the experience of motivation", is dependent upon various "states of mind" which he refers to as 'metamotivational states'. These, he says,

"determine certain general phenomenological characteristics of motivation at a given time: they are about the way in which the individual interprets his own motives... They do not necessarily affect the individual's behaviour, and therefore cannot be equated unequivocally with specified kinds of behaviour, although typically they do have substantial behavioural effects... Another way of describing them would be to say that they are alternative modes available to the individual of assigning meaning to his actions, or lack of actions, or intended actions. In other words, they are an integral part of his interpretation to himself of his life-world and his intentions and behaviour in it." (p39)

Further, they

"go in pairs of opposites... one or other member of each pair being constantly operative during waking life. One of these pairs is referred to as the 'telic-paratelic' pair of states..." (p40)

1. Experiential Meaning and the Experience of Motivation

In the earlier chapter on critical meaning some motivation theories were discussed in a manner that was predominantly goal oriented. This is the

manner in which they are commonly treated. This type of approach is linked to Apter's notion of 'telic states', named after the greek word 'telos' meaning 'goal'.

"The telic state is defined as a phenomenological state in which the individual is primarily oriented towards, or feels the need to be primarily oriented towards, some essential goal or goals."

(p47)

Apter argues that there is something lacking in the common approaches:

"most theories of motivation up to the present time have been at best little more than half-theories: they have in the main dealt in their different ways with motivation in relation to the telic system, but not to the paratelic." (p133)

This "omission" in motivational theories is defensible if one takes the position that the process under consideration here is not, in fact, motivation in the traditional sense of the word, but the "experience of motivation", the experience of a powerful force. The immediate result may be "movement" (Herzberg 1973) through the response of "compliance" (Kelman 1961) in the short-term. However, in the long-term the individual will have had an experience of a force that can cause things to happen. This is the nature of experiential meaning. This can later form the basis of motivation in providing belief constructs that are the means (E-->P)(P-->O) in a means-end network. However, this will arise from transcendent or critical meaning, which have a greater persistence than experiential meaning.

It is for this reason that faith will not arise out of experiential meaning alone. Once the experience has ended experiential meaning is ended. However, the power of contrast will have led to "remembered" constructs which may be

joined with longer lasting transcendent or critical meaning.

The concept of motivation has been used, Apter argues, almost exclusively to refer to homeostatic mechanisms that are compelled to move by various "drives". Theorists who have taken this perspective include Freud (1955), Lorenz (1950), or, for example, Lewin (1935) who says that

"... the effect of a purpose or intention is the formation of a quasi-need, that is, dynamically, of a tension system. This tension system drives toward discharge and causes activities which serve the execution of the purpose." (p242)

Motivation, in this sense, is concerned with directly influencing the activities of the individual. However, other theorists have not confined themselves to this limited, causal-deterministic approach to motivation, allowing for a consideration of developing personal fulfilment and achievement. Maslow's motivation hierarchy (1954) is one such theory. Herzberg's motivation factors (1968) and McGregor theory 'Y' (1960) similarly evidence an appreciation of a combination of freely chosen and determined activities in the process of motivation.

However, I believe that Apter has pinpointed a characteristic emphasis of typical motivation theories, that they focus upon the "goal". In terms of Lawler's motivation model that has been drawn upon a number of times already, the focus of attention is upon "V", the valued outcome, the goal. The direction of argument is that the individual will be motivated if it is believed that effort will lead to performance will lead to outcome.

The role of critical meaning is in guiding the individual: it facilitates

the determination of this sequence of events such that the goal is achieved through planning with understanding of the means-end network. Referent others can also motivate action by influencing the meaning held by the individual, and in a more simple manner the argument is supported by means not only of the transfer of valued outcomes but also by the affective inspiration of belief. Transcendent meaning carries a strong element of support for the "believing" through confidence in the "greater power".

Experiential meaning, however, does not have this focus upon goals but upon "raw belief", upon power. The relationship to motivation is that this may become the belief in a power to achieve $(E \rightarrow P)(P \rightarrow O)$.

Following Apter's theory provides support for this contention. Apter's phenomenological model suggests that another "metamotivational state" needs to be given attention, the 'paratelic state', which

"is defined as a state in which the individual is primarily oriented towards, or feels the need to be primarily oriented towards, some aspect of his continuing behaviour and its related sensations." (p47)

That is, while in the paratelic state of mind the behaviour of the individual is motivated by the pleasure of the activity itself rather than by goals, except insofar as the activity can be seen to be a goal. Commonly appreciated examples of such behaviour are walking in the park, dancing, and playing games. Clearly it is possible that a goal may be 'attached' to such activities, such as walking through the park to get to work for an early start. This is a good example of a situation in which the telic and paratelic states may both be enjoyed, the individual alternating between

enjoying the walk and trying to satisfy the need to get to work on time.

Apter's theory is one of 'Psychological Reversals', that the individual will experience 'reversal' between the poles of the metamotivational state pairs. Taking a phenomenological perspective, an emphasis is placed upon the experience of being in each or either of the states, with a particular emphasis upon the 'feelings' that are experienced. The notion of reversal is important in that Apter argues certain experiences that are pleasant in one state of mind can be unpleasant in the opposite state. For example

"The paratelic state... tends to be associated with... a preference for high intensity experiences... the telic state with... a preference for low intensity experiences." (p367)

Whilst in the telic state the individual will desire to fulfil the drive towards a particular goal, and anything that complicates or interferes with moving towards that goal will tend to frustrate and cause anxiety to a greater or lesser degree. Conversely, in the paratelic state the individual will positively relish ambiguity and even confusion.

A key concept is that of "synergy" which is closely related to the notion of contrast. Describing the act of swimming, Apter suggests that

"The various contrasts involved may... serve to heighten the intensity of the experience: there are the alternating contrasts of being wet and dry, hot and cold, of violent activity and motionless passivity... These opposite sensations, perceptions and apperceptions are contrasted in this way as a part of a deliberate attempt to increase the intensity of the experience."

(p60)

Synergy of meaning is enhanced in this process:

"the different meanings may, through contrast, mutually enhance each other and make each other more vivid - especially where the meanings are strongly opposite in some way." (p361)

The "experience of motivation" in what Apter calls the "paratelic state" is an experience of reality via the senses: it is the experience of contrasts that are more meaningful, more stimulating the greater that contrast becomes. This focus upon "greater contrast" is a focus upon "power", for what is power if not "relative". The power of one man over another may depend upon their relative strengths in various capacities; the power of the waterfall is evident because of the relative height of the river above compared to the river below; the power of the executive is a reflection of her ability to define circumstances in contrast to the inability of others.

Apter is right to suggest that these omissions are inadequacies in much of the motivational literature, for to concentrate upon values or goals is to miss the importance of "power" in contributing to action. Apter overstates his case against the literature because power is often given implicit recognition. Maslow (1954), for example, recognises the role of power in the individual to move from one level to another, and finally into the level of self-actualization: "to be what I could be" rather than a "continuation of what I am".

I find Maslow's theory appealing because the practice of faith is closely linked to the process of self-actualization: it involves going beyond oneself, reaching for a vision even where the evidence is lacking in the present to support taking such risks or making bold moves. However, because

of these very factors, the uncertainty, the risk, the process cannot arise solely from "understanding": if I am seeking to achieve what is already known to me, then I am not reaching beyond myself: I am not "self-actualizing".

Consequently understanding must, by definition, be below the threshold for stimulating action. The action that is faith can only arise where meaning comes from "beyond oneself". However, this describes transcendent or experiential meaning, whereas critical meaning has been argued to be internalized and so fully a part of oneself. It is in this sense that faith does not arise out of the critical faculties of the individual, but out of the ability to believe and trust in options that do not have a convincing proof.

Therefore, faith arising from critical meaning involves becoming a "referent other" to oneself: one accepts an option and acts upon it on the basis of the confidence that one has in oneself in just the same way as one acts on transcendent meaning derived from another, the belief is "person-specific" rather than "situation specific".

These aspects of critical and transcendent meaning are important, but it is important to remember the importance of power in motivating action. A focus upon goals is valuable, but conscious consideration of power is equally beneficial. Experiential meaning is the most clear source of the power to achieve.

As self-actualizing faith is practised, the three sources of meaning will play complementary roles:

experiential meaning will provide the knowledge of power, (E-->P) and (P-->O);

transcendent meaning may provide both confidence in power and direction that is beyond oneself, (E-->P), (P-->O), and V;

critical meaning will provide stability in oneself, giving understanding, personal power and direction, (E-->P), (P-->O), and V.

The role of experiential meaning is in providing the belief in the power to achieve.

2. Experiential Meaning and Charismatic Leadership

John and Pat are very "paratelic" people: they enjoy "high intensity experiences", for example attending large gatherings of Christians, going to the front of such charismatic Christian meetings to give testimony or merely to be "in the thick of it". They also tell a lot of "powerful stories". Whenever I see them after a time apart, they are guaranteed to have a new "amazing" story of something that has happened. Their vocabulary is scattered, liberally, with adjectives such as "incredible", "very", "fantastic" and the like.

There is an energy in this "paratelic" persona that is characteristic of charismatic leaders: considerable drive and energy, inspiration, enthusiasm, combined with a risk-loving, go-getting approach to life. It is my experience that the telic (SEU) approach is not often so dominant in such leaders, except in the most successful. It is because they combine the different sources of meaning that they are so successful: they approach situations with lots of enthusiasm (experiential/transcendent) and get it right (critical/transcendent) most of the time.

Some Influential Experiences

The rest of this chapter develops John and Pat's story, highlighting the data which has stimulated the argument of this chapter.

Powerful experiences can be good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant at the time. The result of a bad experience of power can however ^{have} good results in the long term, giving a knowledge of power that can be used at a later date. For example, a naive comment in the wrong company may present an individual with an experience of very unpleasant conflict. Hopefully the lesson will be learned concerning the importance of "political astuteness" and less naivete will be shown in the future.

In the same fashion, John and Pat believe that some good came out of a painful experience for Pat. In 1967 Pat had a son, Pete. She was unmarried and some at the church that she attended did not appear to approve of this and Pat experienced discrimination for being a "single mother", a "woman of dubious character". She was prohibited from helping run the Sunday School. Pat believes this to have been an important time for her:

"...the time when God gave me a love for people that are rejected was when I had Pete. The rejection that I experienced from Christians then... made me determined to show Christ's love to the unlovely."

Pat is still committed to "unlovely people". This event still has a lot of meaning for Pat, and she feels strongly about what has happened and in some ways her actions are a protest against a Christianity that rejects people because they are, for whatever reason, unlovely or undesirable.

For Pat there was great power to destroy in the act of rejection; in contrast she knows that there is great power to build up and encourage in acceptance.

Another form of power that John and Pat began to experience was the power of God. This has been mentioned in the story already, particularly with reference to their growing involvement in the charismatic movement of Christians in this country. It was also experienced in the less dramatic "evangelical" movement, a more "normal and respectable" element of mainstream Christianity in this country. The power was the power to change lives.

Working with the young people at the youth clubs in Southampton, John and Pat were encouraged by the change in the club members, particularly some of the "hard cases". Over time, John and Pat gained the trust of a number of the members through being loving and accepting, putting trust in these young people who had not experienced much love or trust before. The defensive, aggressive youngsters gradually warmed to become open and affectionate with John and Pat.

Pat recalls the time that she left her purse in the kitchen of the youth club, and at the end of the evening discovered that ten pounds had been removed. The club members still in the hall were asked if they knew anything about it, but none did. John and Pat put it down to experience and their own fault for leaving it there. However, within three days, one of the youth arrived at their door with a ten pounds note, indicating that one club member would not be coming to the club in the future. The club members had found the culprit and dealt with the situation without reference to John and

Pat. This experience gave John and Pat an indication of how far their relationship with the youth had come.

However, over the six years of running the youth clubs John and Pat began to recognise the need for a more dedicated approach to caring for many of the young people that they were meeting. Running a youth club and seeing the young people individually as they called into John and Pat's home throughout the week was all very well, but it didn't seem to be enough. John and Pat's desire was to see these young people happier, living more fulfilled lives than the drinking, smoking, stealing and breaking-and-entering that their home lives frequently offered and encouraged. (This applied particularly to the older age group, being those between the ages of 16 and 23, although it was applicable to those from the age of 9 and 10 upwards).

To an extent John and Pat were able to show a lifestyle that was appealing, but in the main it just did not seem to be attainable to these young people. Some made Christian commitments and indicated their desire to adopt a different lifestyle. The evangelical gospel was power for John and Pat in this situation: they could see it changing lives.

Shane, a particular favourite, came very close to serving a prison sentence for stealing bicycles shortly after he became a Christian. Pat went to court and her testimony did a lot to keep Shane out on the streets. Gradually Shane's life changed and he no longer found himself in trouble with the police, but began to work with young people like himself, helping them. However, all was not plain sailing for Shane or others like him.

John and Pat saw that often the change did not last because every time they

went back to their own homes and groups of friends, the old lifestyle tended to prevail.

As they worked with the young people and built relationships with them, one of the solutions that John and Pat began to dream of was a larger home than they possessed that would allow them to invite some of these young people into what would be "their extended family". As Pat summed it up:

"The idea for a residential house came out of young people like Shane becoming Christians. We realised that we were sending them back into an untenable situation."

However, as has already been suggested, John and Pat could see no way of achieving this in Southampton.

The charismatic movement offered still more potential power: the power of an imminent God who gave powerful gifts (charismata), even of healing or miracles. John and Pat tell a number of stories about their early experiences of this power of God. For example, when John and Pat were in Southampton they wanted to know if God wanted them to move to Plymouth. They believed that God gave them support in selling their car and their house. These stories serve as a reminder of the power of God in their lives. They are recorded below to show the powerful meaning that these events had for John and Pat.

1) The Volvo Story

JOHN "We'd fairly recently bought this Volvo Estate... from Jarvis', a second-hand car dealer. I'd bought cars there for years... I said to the Lord, "If you want us to move, we're very clearly

not going to need a big estate car, so we want you to sell it for us." We knew the odds weren't that brilliant against selling it. There were several factors: one was it was June or July, coming up to the change of registration..; another was that petrol had just gone up in price quite drastically and therefore people weren't buying bigger cars; and thirdly the economy wasn't very good at the time - people just didn't have the money around. So I went back to Jarvis' and said, "That Volvo you sold me - I want to sell it". "What, part-exchange?". I said, "No, I want to sell it. I would like to sell it back to you", and they said, "I'm ever so sorry... We've got a forecourt that's full of cars, we're just coming up to registration and we have committed ourselves to buying cars off of people. Our bank manager just won't let us buy any more cars". They said, "Look, what we'll do for you is: we'll do the car up, put it on the forecourt and sell it for you and charge you commission. But don't hold your breath, it could take three months to sell it". I said, "Okay" and delivered the car to them on a Monday morning. They spruced it up and put it on the forecourt."

PAT "On the Thursday I got a phone call. They said, "I thought you'd like to know we've sold your car". I said, "Oh great!". I mean, he was just shattered and he said, "Actually we sold it yesterday. If I had advised you to ring round some of our customers to see if they were interested, this would have been a man I would never ever have given you - he's a sports car fanatic. He came to us yesterday and said, "Look, I've just got two big dogs. I've got to change my car. What have you got?". Of

course we'd put your car on the forecourt on the Tuesday... This guy said, "Fine, I'll come in tomorrow and pay for it". Because we just couldn't believe it would come off, we didn't phone you yesterday. But he's been in today, signed the papers, and you'll be getting the cheque". I don't know who was more surprised - him or me. I think it was him!".

2) The House

JOHN "We had a turn of the century, terraced house. A typical middle-Victorian place, a three bedroomed house. So we thought, "Well, we'll put it on the market". I can't remember, did we say, "Okay Lord, you sell it for us"? I think we did, but it was as vague as that. We didn't say, "We want you to sell it quickly" or "for the price we're asking" or anything like that."

PAT "We said, "We want you to show even more clearly that your hand is on our move". We were just about to go on a week's holiday, so we said to my mother, "Do you mind showing people around?", and she said, "No, of course not". That was three or four days before we went on holiday and we put the house in the hands of the estate agents... Two days later, the day before going on holiday, the estate agents rang and said, "We've got a couple who want to look at your house. They're coming down from London". So I said, "If you give my mother a ring, you can arrange a time for her to show you around"... We rang my mother up during the week and they'd made an offer to buy it. We were staggered."

JOHN "We spent the last half of the holiday thinking, "Ooh heck!".

3) Pat's Healing

The most powerful story, however, is the episode of Pat's healing. This event is intricately linked to the faith that John and Pat practised in the development of the charitable organization, "The Spring".

For a number of years Pat had been suffering from very bad rheumatism and arthritis in the knee and hip joints of both legs, and gradually this was becoming worse. As a result of the progressively limited movement that this ailment brought about, Pat began to suffer from very serious circulatory problems in her legs, resulting in her admittance to hospital with blood clots in her legs on more than one occasion. Her post as a Nursing Officer necessitated a great deal of walking from ward to ward, and it soon became apparent to Pat and her superiors that she would soon be unable to carry out her daily work. In her late thirties, Pat was pensioned off on the grounds of ill-health.

This was a devastating blow to Pat who gained a great deal of fulfilment from her work: it held great value for her. The prospect of becoming a house-bound cripple could never be considered an easy one to face. Looking back, Pat believes that God used the illness to take her out of a job that she would otherwise have been totally unprepared to forsake.

"I would never ever have been open to leaving my job... my legs were used as a way of getting me out of what God wanted me out of."

She believed that this was in order to free her for the life and work that God had planned. However, the period of worsening illness was a very difficult one, challenging some of the most important aspects of their lives

because Pat was prevented from most activities by the extreme pain of her condition. For some eighteen months after Pat's enforced retirement they had little hope of relief. Pat recalls

"I think the first indication of healing in a practical way was going to hear Colin Urquhart in Guildford shortly after I retired."

Colin Urquhart is a Christian speaker with an international reputation who is renowned for his healing ministry to the sick. He provided John and Pat with a new, and challenging, way of looking at the world. However, this way was not completely alien to them. John remembers

"Our expectation of God at that time was very limited. I had been praying for Pat's healing but with very very small faith. I didn't even know anybody who had been healed, I hadn't even heard of anyone being healed at that point. It was just a vague glimmer in the back of my mind that Jesus healed in the Bible, why couldn't He heal now? So my prayers were very wishy-washy, they were beyond the limit of my expectation. In fact, come to think of it, I don't know why we bothered."

John and Pat both desired her to be free from this condition, but they were not sure how this could happen. However, it was of sufficient importance to them that they sought a solution, and they had some expectation, even though small, that the solution might be healing by God.

As mentioned above, John and Pat moved to Plymouth in 1982. This was only shortly after Pat's retirement, and she was suffering increasing distress. Combined with the fact that they were not carrying out the youth work that

they had come to do, Pat describes some of the hardship that she experienced:

"... the first six months of being down here was terrible because I hadn't got anything to do. Three months of that I hadn't got a home to run. I hadn't got any youth work, hadn't got any secular employment, and I realised that I couldn't relax - I was incapable of sitting still... I think God really brought me to a halt."

Adding to the gravity of Pat's situation the weather was cold and damp which served to exacerbate her condition, the pain becoming so great that she was barely able to walk fifty yards without having to sit down to rest. The very hilly surroundings led to Pat becoming imprisoned within her own home: the situation was desperate. Pat recalled

"I was more depressed then than I have ever been. I felt like I had nothing."

Pat's condition was a progressive thing, and it was as it became worse and worse that it became more and more unbearable.

The Easter of 1983 was a crucial turning point. John, Pat and their son Pete, left Plymouth for a week to attend a holiday week in North Wales, called Spring Harvest, joining with four thousand Christians in a holiday camp that was taken over for the Easter period. A combination of relaxation, worship and teaching the time had proven a favourite with John and Pat for a number of years. This year was to be special because during one of the late night prayer meetings Pat had a deep spiritual experience that was later believed to be God healing her legs.

Having suffered particularly that week with the terrible cold and damp, Pat found herself able to walk freely, even to run.

Summary

Experiential Meaning

Contrast provides the power of meaning. The experience of the senses is based upon the simple but most powerful form of contrast: the antonym, which is "gradable". That is, the contrasts experienced through the senses provide a clear idea of "extent" of the difference, the measure of "power".

In normal situations the contrast needs to be that much greater to stand out from the normal flow of events which is filled with variety and contrast. Particularly powerful experiences do stand out and can become "axiomatic experiences" for an individual, leading to the internalization of primitive beliefs that form philosophical or religious assumptions from which all other beliefs may grow.

An important consideration is that it is possible to attribute positive or negative meaning to the axiomatic event, depending upon one's "state of mind". This is rooted in the fact that experiential meaning is not focused upon a goal, but is based upon the experience of power. It has been argued throughout this thesis that meaning has both a "directional" component and a "power" component. Experiential meaning has no direction other than itself, and so the mere "experience of power" may be interpreted differently according to the extent to which it either helps or hinders in the attainment of valued goals. This may be different for the same person, with respect to different goals.

However, if experiential meaning is combined with transcendent meaning, the direction is provided in the "received values", V, and the experience of power can provide a heightened expectancy of the attainment of the goal $(E \rightarrow P)(P \rightarrow O)$.

John and Pat had held the valued goal of helping young people and establishing a residential house for a number of years. It was noted in chapter 5 that all they lacked in Southampton was the belief that they could do it. This belief in their capacity came through the involvement of God, whose power was demonstrated to them through a succession of axiomatic experiences, most notably in Pat's healing.

The combination of critical, transcendent and experiential meaning had come to a point of considerable power and focused direction by the summer of 1983. John and Pat were then faced with the choice of whether they would act in line with this meaning, or whether they would follow alternative meanings.

PART THREE

FROM MEANING TO ACTION: GROUNDING

CHAPTER 8

CHOICE

It was noted earlier that values can be influential in motivating action, but the influence is in some way "subtle". Campbell (1989) observed some successful companies who managed to "ground" strongly held values in "standards and behaviours". In the same way, the action that is the practice of faith arises out of the three elements of meaning outlined so far, but only to the extent that the meaning is "grounded" in behaviour.

Action arises from meaning, but the presence of meaning does not imply that action will always arise. For example, an individual may know that smoking is bad, causing possibly irreparable damage to the body, but that person may not stop smoking. The meaning may be strong but it may not be strong enough. The link between meaning and action is choice.

The process of "grounding", or bringing into "the real world", occurs through choice and commitment. Choice turns meaning into a behaviour; commitment ensures that the behaviour will continue in the face of resistance.

This chapter discusses the act of choice, considering the "decisiveness" of action in the context of the meaning held by the actor. This underlies the practice of faith, which is freely entered into and never the direct result of compliance. Despite the evident risks, John and Pat chose to start their project of their own volition; nobody forced them to do it. The basis of this

was that it was important to them, and at heart they believed that with God on their side they could do it.

However, the discussion of choice is fraught with philosophical difficulties. In order to recognise these difficulties, the first section addresses some of the issues related to the notion of choice. The fundamental question is whether free will exists or not.

Freewill versus Determinism

O'Connor (1971) distinguishes between "Happenings", for example eclipses, showers of rain, motorcar accidents or the fall of a tree; and "Actions", such as making promises, signing cheques, choosing a pair of shoes, or voting in an election. This distinction is a convenient entrance into the maze of the free will/determinism debate.

The question is, "Is there a distinction between happenings and actions?". A related question is put by Campbell (1966). He asks:

"Does a contra-causal type of freedom anywhere exist?"

Campbell argues that it does and seeks to demonstrate that it exists in the area of moral responsibility. At issue is the concept of freedom of action, such that given a particular act by actor A,

"A could have acted otherwise." (p123)

The context used by Campbell is one of contrasting the moral responsibility of the actor to "do his duty" in a particular situation, with the tendency of the individual to "take the line of least resistance" and act in line with his "strongest desire". If there is no conflict between these two, then

there is no issue.

Campbell suggests that, unless there is a conflict between the inclination of the actor and the direction given by a moral authority, there is no requirement for the actor to exercise his will, and therefore freedom of will is not relevant. He argues that,

"...there are an almost immeasurably greater number of situations in a man's life that conform to this pattern than there are situations in which an agent is aware of a conflict between strongest desire and duty... [but] it is precisely that small sector of the field of choices which our principle of delimitation still leaves open to free will - the sector in which strongest desire clashes with duty - that is crucial for moral responsibility." (p131)

In such a situation, Campbell argues, it is

"... creative activity which we are trying to understand when we are trying to understand what is traditionally designated by 'free will'." (p132)

That is, the actor must perform a creative act of the will to choose duty 'X' rather than desire 'Y'. This was the argument put forward in chapter 5 on critical meaning, distinguishing between being motivated by "inner drives" and "self-actualizing" activity.

The ready argument against this is that 'duty' is in fact a 'stronger desire' than the so-called 'strongest desire' of the actor, in which case the actor is merely acting in the line of least resistance and not choosing

freely at all. Campbell's defence comes in the form of a bold subjective declaration rather than any appeal to objective verification:

"I cannot doubt... that my choice is not just the expression of my formed character, and yet is a choice made by myself." (p133)

That is, a choice not for some "inner" desire, but a choice that involves an action "beyond oneself". Such a choice is therefore a 'free' act. This subjective proof should be respected as a defence, he says, because

"the only direct evidence there could be for a creative activity like 'free will' is an intuition of the practical consciousness." (p134)

The intuitive nature of Campbell's argument expressed in this way takes on more weight when considering the experience of making a particularly difficult choice:

"Not, of course, that the self's character... either is or is supposed by the agent to be devoid of bearing upon his choices, even in the 'sector' in which free will is held to operate. On the contrary, such a bearing is manifest in the empirically verifiable fact that we find it 'harder' (as we say) to make the effort of will required to 'rise to duty' in proportion to the extent that the 'dutiful' course conflicts with the course to which our character as so far formed inclines us." (p134)

In terms of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, outlined in chapter 5, we find it easier to gratify "lower order" desires than to "self-actualize", reaching beyond ourselves to fulfil an externally determined duty. Thus, although the reward is 'greater' in some 'higher form' if I follow duty, I will follow

desire if I relax my will, if I cease to make effort. It is this experience of 'going against the flow' that indicates the performance of a free act.

The key phrase used by Campbell is that describing the "character as so far formed". The implication is that character can grow in line with duty, such that duty and desire tend more often to be in harmony. This is what I refer to elsewhere as "personal development" and is an important product of the practice of faith.

Bateson (1972) refers to "defenses in depth", providing examples of somatic and behavioural change to illustrate this phenomenon:

"Among higher organisms it is not unusual to find that there is what we may call a "defense in depth" against environmental demands. If a man is moved from sea level to 10 000 feet, he may begin to pant and his heart may race. But these first changes are swiftly reversible: if he descends the same day, they will disappear immediately. If, however, he remains at high altitude, a second line of defense appears. He will become slowly acclimated as a result of complex physiological changes...A similar "defense in depth" is clearly recognizable in the field of behaviour. When we encounter a new problem for the first time, we deal with it either by trial and error or possibly by insight. Later, and more or less gradually, we form the "habit" of acting in the way which earlier experience rewarded. To continue to use insight or trial and error upon this class of problem would be wasteful. These mechanisms can now be saved for other problems." (p351)

Similarly, to continue to make continued effort of the will for the same acts of duty would prove an arduous task. However, 'building character', as the process is described, is a powerful defense in depth because it allows duty to be performed which would have been 'harder' still, had not the conflict with desire been lessened by the change in character.

Free will, as outlined above, is therefore evident only in what we may call "marginal acts": those situations where there is conflict between duty and desire, but not so much conflict that the effort of will required is prohibitive.

The practice of faith is intimately tied up with what Bateson refers to as "trial and error... or insight" where a new "problem" is faced. The "problem" experience is the awareness of the conflict that has arisen because the action necessary for the fulfilment of a proposal is not in the "line of least resistance".

Choice and a Referent Other

Campbell's concept of duty is an excellent example of a "proposal" (Boothroyd 1978), implying response to an authority rather than deliberation and rationalization. Duty has been defined as "conduct due to parents and superiors; respect... tasks, conduct, service or functions that arise from one's position, job or moral obligations... assigned service or business." (Longmans Family Dictionary 1985). Faith, in this sense, is the free act in line with the word of an authority.

This is a seeming paradox, for to do what an authority says in an unqualified manner is commonly recognised as an expression of servitude,

equated with a lack of freedom. However, this is a misnomer, for such lack of freedom exists only if the authority imposes the servitude. If this is not imposed then the actor is free to respond to the authority or not.

The concept is not so esoteric or religious as might at first seem. For example, wherever there is 'respect' for a person, ideology, or school of thought, then there is potential for an act of faith. To respect someone is to recognise value in what they are in certain attributes, and to be prepared to listen and take note of opinions and actions. This is one of the major 'lubricating oils' within formal organizational structures. Often referred to as the 'informal structure', this body of relationships based upon mutual respect, or deferential esteem, forms the basis of many action which are acts of faith, respecting the authoritative opinion of another.

A large part of the confusion arises because of the notion of authority being understood as solely 'positional authority'. However, faith does not arise from deference to position, but out of response to the person, out of the relationship. Similarly an ideology or school of thought must be "taken on board" if it is to become a source of faith: a 'relationship' develops between the actor and the body of thought or belief.

Some Theoretical Difficulties

The error of reification is a problem which can inhibit understanding of the nature of choice. Reification is a source of difficulty because it is necessary to appreciate that choice is the personal, not organizational, response of those individual actors who are engaged in strategy formulation: only a person may exercise free will, an organization cannot be creative; only a person can recognise an opportunity and consider responding to it.

Child (1972) criticised many of the existing approaches to management science because of this error of reification. He argued for an appreciation of the significance of persons in the strategic decision making process:

"... available models in fact attempt to explain organizations at one remove by ignoring the essentially political process, whereby power-holders within organizations decide upon courses of strategic action. This 'strategic choice' typically includes not only the establishment of structural norms but also the manipulation of environmental features and the choice of relevant performance standards." (p1)

Child is arguing that the political process should be appreciated as an important source of power and meaning; the decisions of power-holders are choices of strategy that can serve a creative process.

Choice is seen as the process of allowing forces within the market to play one against the other. This is an "objective" view of choice, in that it concentrates upon the activities of choice. Child includes the individual, taking us away from the error of reification, but the analysis here will be taken one step further, considering choice as an "experience" rather than as an "objective" phenomenon. Choice is useful as a notion in understanding and supporting the practice of faith to the extent that it is addressed in terms of the meaning held by the individual.

Enabling Choice

John and Pat were stirred to action by their beliefs and the experiences that they had; but they were not compelled to do what they did. The important factor is that they were presented with an "opportunity", by

various personal and environmental influences, and they chose to take that opportunity.

Iacocca (1985) suggests that

"If I had to sum up in one word the qualities that make a good manager, I'd say that it all comes down to decisiveness. You can use the fanciest computers in the world and you can gather all the charts and numbers, but in the end you have to bring all your information together, set up a timetable, and act." (p50)

Underlying the notion of "decisiveness" are some of the characteristics that have been highlighted so far in this study of faith: self-confidence or confidence in another (E-->P), confidence in having the right answer (P-->O), importance (V), the support of "wiser" or more experienced others, and power. These are all factors that can serve to enable the actor to convert an opportunity into action and reality.

This notion of "enabling" is an important one, because action does not arise out of nothing but out of meaning, and for the individual to choose to take an opportunity that involves risk that person must reach the point where choosing to go against the norm "makes sense". For this reason "choice" is only a possibility under certain circumstances. For example, if a manager wishes to encourage a subordinate to take more responsibility, she may delegate a task. Let us assume that this manager is "enlightened" and does not force this task upon the individual, but offers it as an opportunity for personal development. The opportunity will only be a "real opportunity" to the extent that the subordinate is interested in the task (V) and believes that he can do it (E-->P)(P-->O). Otherwise the individual will either not

be inclined to bother, or may be too frightened of the consequences. This does not give a choice.

Choice may occur, then, where the activity has a sufficient level of meaning for the individual, in terms of importance and in terms of capacity to achieve. Anything else will be a form of determinism, not choice. Within the field of organizational theory, consideration of environmental determinism forms a large part of the available research. Van de Ven and Astley (1981) categorise the various theories based on the emphasis placed on "deterministic versus voluntaristic assumptions about human nature". (p428)

Conversely, Hrebiniak and Joyce (1985) argue that the literature concerning organizational adaptation and change is erroneously split into two opposing camps. The one viewing adaptation as the result of the process of voluntary selection and choice; the other explicating change as the reaction to environmental forces (Child 1972, Aldrich 1979). They argue against the persisting view that a

"... binary distinction between choice and determinism captures the reality of organizational behaviour and change. As popular and intuitively pleasing as these categories may be, a reliance with one or the other directs attention away from the fact that both are essential to an accurate description of organizational adaptation." (p336)

They suggest that

"The implicit power model is one of influence and countervailing power, and the relative power of organization and environment,

i.e. external stakeholders, over time is the key to explaining the prepotency of choice or determinism in the adaptation process. If high organizational power suggests greater choice, while higher power of stakeholders results in greater environmental determinism, the occasion of a powerful organization confronting equally powerful stakeholders indicates that high choice and high determinism may coexist."

(p 337)

However, Hrebiniak and Joyce are wrong to try to remove the distinction between choice and determinism. The source of their error is semantic, a confusion arising from the construction of "determinism" and "choice" as objective phenomena rather than as personal experiences. 'High organizational power' suggests greater 'potency of choice' not greater experience of choice. If one is powerful, but faces a greater power one may be forced to comply. Power can have no influence upon the act of choice, except insofar that it restricts or gives an opportunity for freedom to be exercised. For example, the power of the referee in a game of football to punish offenders allows the skills of the attacker free expression, without the fear that he will be fouled. The extent to which a person thinks he is free will be dependent upon the extent to which he perceives the environment might allow such a choice to be fulfilled.

However, Hrebiniak and Joyce's model makes an important observation concerning the interdependence of determinism and choice. Choice can only be exercised to the extent that the individual is "enabled", both by personal characteristics, such as intelligence and understanding, and by environmental influences, such as powerful others or circumstance.

The Interdependence of Determinism and Choice

The most simple model of the experience of choice may occur where the individual perceives the contrary determining factors (D) to be potentially outweighed by the favourable determining factors (F). That is, choice may be experienced where it is construed that

$$F > D \quad (1)$$

but determinism will be experienced where

$$D > F \quad (2)$$

However, it can be argued that (1) is no less an example of determinism than (2), no matter what it feels like. However, if consideration of time differences is made, some interesting insights can be drawn from this model to demonstrate a distinction between choice and determinism whilst recognising the interdependence.

Developing the model we may distinguish the activity of personal commitment (A) as a particular favourable determining factor. It is worth distinguishing it because (A) will only be "released" by the choice to act. Thus, if the situation in the environment is observed to be

$$D > F \quad (2)$$

then the individual may not recognise the situation as an opportunity. However, if the situation is construed not "as it is seen now" but "as it might be in the future" the equation may be turned:

$$F \cdot A > D \quad (3)$$

This is an example of the process of faith, turning the equation from the way that it might be seen from one perspective by drawing upon powers that

may not be immediately obvious. Indeed, as time develops the powers, (E-->P) and (P-->O), from the realms of "critical" (C), "transcendent" (T), and "experiential" (E), ^{meaning} may increase. This can be represented thus:

$$F*A*C*T*E > D \quad (4)$$

This describes the creative activity of faith. Even where the situation is perceived to be unfavourable as in equation (2), possibly over a long period of time the contrary forces are gradually but increasingly outweighed by the favourable forces that are brought into play. One might say that this is a process whereby the originally perceived "facts" of the situation can be turned on their heads by the faith of the individual which produces "FACTE"s!

The reality of this set of equations is a little different to the theory, for these variables will be largely unknown. For example, contrary determining forces for an organization may be a function of the activities of numerous parties, for example

$$D = f(\text{competitors, suppliers, consumers, legislation,})$$

Although market research can go some way to providing some information concerning some of these factors, the reality of the situation is that decisions will be made in the context of considerable "uncertainty". Similarly, how does one quantify the favourable factors in order to determine the balance of the equation?

The decision support methods, which tend to be based upon subjective expected utility (SEU) models, address this problem, and, as was argued in chapter 5, these can play an important role in increasing "critical meaning"

and thereby encouraging and helping effective action. The basis of this approach will be to seek confirmation or "verification". That is, action will arise out of meaning where, and only where

$$F*A*C*T*E > D \quad (5)$$

Action will not be allowed to arise where

$$F*A*C*T*E < D \quad (6)$$

but most importantly, action will also not arise where the balance of the equation is unknown, which we may represent thus:

$$F*A*C*T*E <??> D \quad (7)$$

This situation is not "verified", and therefore action will be discouraged. However, the focus of this thesis has been to suggest that encouraging "faith" is an alternative route to addressing this problem; to suggest not only that confidence can come from transcendent or experiential as well as critical sources, but also that the practice of faith is not a daft idea. The practice of faith is in fact supported as a sensible idea by the extent to which it is practised in science (Einstein 1954, James 1904, Kuhn 1970), business (Iacocca 1985, Kanter 1983, Campbell 1989), and all other walks of life. The practice of faith is to approach the above equation and say something like,

"Do we definitely believe that this can't be done? If not, then there is an opportunity here. Is there a way that we can manage the situation so that we can get things to work as far as possible in our favour? That is, are we prepared to give this everything we've got to make it succeed? If so, we've got a chance."

This approach, rather than the approach of trying to determine the balance of the equation, concentrates upon the variable over which the decision makers have most control: their own effort, commitment and capacities. The fundamental difference of this approach is that action can arise where

$$F*A*C*T*E > D \quad (5)$$

AND where

$$F*A*C*T*E <??> D \quad (7)$$

but not where

$$F*A*C*T*E < D \quad (6)$$

That is, action is possible in the category of situations where uncertainty prevails, the category in which probably most important decisions will lie!

This difference is the nub of a useful distinction between determinism and choice: choice can operate in that "middle ground" of uncertainty. Outside of this middle ground is, on the one side, environmental determinism and, on the other side, the determinism of the power-holder. Determinism refers to the experience of "going with the line of least resistance", such as cultural norms, market forces or powerful personalities. The choice that can "ground" meaning in the practice of faith will involve the experience of risk and "going against the flow" to a greater or lesser extent.

Making the Choice

The discussion above differentiating between determinism and choice concentrates upon the importance of relative power, and it was suggested that it is meaningful to suggest that the individual has made a choice in situations where the balance of power is uncertain; determinism refers to those situations where the outcome is more predictable. This is not a

restrictive definition, implying that choice will occur only rarely, because the majority of important decisions will be in situations of uncertainty.

Making the choice is a different matter: why will a person choose one way rather than another? Having argued that this is not a function of any determining factors with respect to the likelihood of the outcome, what will encourage the taking of risk rather than the avoidance of risk?

In considering the actual moment of decision, the point at which, balancing on a knife-edge of uncertainty, the individual commits herself one way or the other, I have little to say. This is a complex philosophical question that others more capable than I have addressed in great depth. For example, an interesting approach to this problem is taken by Dennett (1981), but his argument is, by his own confession, a "sketch" rather than a rigorous proof of mechanism.

However, I do have a few comments with respect to the practicalities of decision support based upon the argument of this thesis so far. The factor that is independent of the basis of distinction between choice and the "powers" of determinism but is still related to meaning is "importance" (V). Quite simply, the more important the potential outcome of the activity, the more likely the actor will be to choose to take a risk.

Thus, if it can be determined that the actor experiences the activity as an opportunity, that is

$$F*A*C*T*E \quad <??> \quad D \quad (7)$$

then the risk will be taken where

$$Vo(F*A*C*T*E) \quad > \quad Va(D) \quad (8)$$

where V_o = Value attributed to outcome achieved by taking risk
and V_a = Value of alternative outcome achieved if risk is avoided.

Commitment to Choice

It will be argued in the following chapter that the process of commitment binds the person to certain behavioural acts, thereby mitigating against a person's freedom to change direction, serving to close off options, and severely restricting action in the future. As a consequence of this, in general, people will be reticent to make commitments. Rosenhead (1978) expresses this in commenting

"One may admire the fanatic for his certainty but most of us prefer to keep our options open." (p105)

As John and Pat began to practice faith they faced such considerations. However, they chose to commit themselves. Why?

Kiesler argues that "incentives" are significant in the process of commitment:

"Incentives for performing consonant behaviour do not affect one's attitude at the time, but they do determine one's reaction to subsequent influence attempts. It's as if the person did not critically evaluate the incentive at the time of action, but it becomes crucial later. I say "as if", but I suspect that this is probably what happens." (p39)

Consequently, Kiesler argues, the process of choosing to commit oneself is a retrospective act. An "incentive" is an "incentive" because it has 'significant meaning' for the individual as it is retrospectively

considered. The "significance" results from the fact that it is sufficiently different to the normal flow of occurring events. This criterion was suggested by Staw (1979) as important in motivating the individual to respond.

"Even if some rewards are highly contingent on accomplishments, their impact upon resultant motivation may be negligible when large systems rewards are already provided. Thus, we would argue that variance in task performance can best be accounted for by measuring the difference between the expected values of two behaviour outcome sequences..." (p61)

Two practical implications can be drawn from these comments. Firstly, the simple premise that the individual will be more likely to commit himself to a risky course of action if the outcome is important to him.

Secondly, there is a need to allow the individual time to "retrospectively consider" the implications of those values. That is, if one wishes to encourage an individual to practice faith, then time must be allowed for the person to come to the place of choosing to commit himself. The practice of salesmen to "close the sale" runs counter to this suggestion, and will, in all likelihood, affect the quality of the commitment made. The importance of this "quality of commitment" is addressed in the following chapter.

Summary

Choice

This chapter has discussed the creative activity of choice, which may be identified in the process of "self-actualization". Choice, rather than any form of determinism, is operating in reaching "beyond oneself", beyond the

drive of inner desires and the capacity of character. The act of "duty", of responding to the transcendent meaning derived from a referent other, was identified as an act of choice.

The practice of faith involves this practice of choice. Going beyond the understanding that one already has, one may choose to act in situations of uncertainty. However, personal development and growing character have been identified as important prerequisites for facilitating the practice of faith, for these provide the base from which a risk may be taken. The manager or guide must therefore assess the capacity of the individual before providing an opportunity, because if it is too far "beyond" the capacity of the individual, then it will not be perceived as an opportunity but an impossibility.

Decisiveness was suggested to be the primary quality of a good manager. This decisiveness may be facilitated by the process of "enabling": giving an awareness of power to the individual. This is the heart of the interdependence of determinism and choice, for power is the combination of determining forces.

The individual will make a choice in situations of uncertainty where the goal is of sufficient importance, such that, having reflected upon the incentives, the risk is deemed worth taking.

These characteristics of power and importance have formed the basis of the discussion of meaning in the previous chapters. For John and Pat these factors were present in sufficient measure to encourage them to make the choice to act in a situation of considerable uncertainty. The manner in

which they made the choices which were to commit them to a course of action for the next four years is described in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 9

COMMITMENT

Lowenthal (1986) carried out a study with British students attempting to assess the factors affecting religious commitment. It was observed:

"Two different prototypes of religious person are being proffered - the gullible and dependent character by the non-religious and the inspired and independent prototype by the religious... This sample of British students as a whole preferred explanations of religiosity in terms of purpose in life, need for security, and upbringing, but the religious and non-religious differed in their preferred explanations. The non-religious British student preferred explanations of religiosity such as brainwashing, unquestioning attitudes, and a need for security. The religious British student preferred explanations of inspirational experience." (p123)

The argument of this thesis suggests that such a dichotomy of interpretation as that proposed by Lowenthal is unnecessary, for these observations of both non-religious and religious students can both be seen to have value. The individual who practices faith is both dependent and independent, perhaps gullible but also inspired. If brainwashing is a criticism, who has not been conditioned by life's experiences? Hamlet suffered from a "questioning attitude", and we all need security!

To practice faith is to perform a complex set of activities, such that it may be seen, at its most developed level, as a "way of life". A characteristic of this set of activities is that it is relatively robust and the individual believer can therefore withstand considerable disagreement, even attack, on elements of that faith. Faith can therefore be understood as a system of attitudes that are "tightly coupled" (Glassman 1973, Weick 1976, 1979b) and relatively "loosely coupled" with other systems surrounding it.

It is the process of commitment that gives the faith system its characteristic "robustness". The work on commitment in this thesis will be drawing particularly upon the work of Kiesler (1971) whose conception of commitment has provided a basis for the analysis undertaken. The working definition proposed by Kiesler is:

"Commitment shall be taken to mean the pledging or binding of the individual to behavioural acts". (p30)

This serves to provide a clear demarcation between commitment and phenomena that tend, behaviourally, to be closely related that is not present in much of the literature (Buchanan 1974, Hrebiniak and Alutto 1972). For example, commitment is often confused with conviction, importance or value, extremeness of attitude, dissonance, familiarity of issues, and social support. Commitment is a phenomenon in its own right, rather than a notion that expresses facets of other terms that are in common usage.

The nature of commitment is important to grasp in order to appreciate its relation to the practice of faith. Like "choice" commitment is argued to be separate from the meaning from which action arises, and from the action that is the practice of faith. Commitment is a second element in the process of

what has been called the "grounding" of the meaning into the tangible behaviours that constitute the practice of faith. Commitment is thus not seen as a part of the activity of the individual that encourages Kelly (1963) to suggest that man is a "form of motion". In this context, Kiesler (1971) answers the question

"Is commitment motivating? I don't think so, not by itself anyway... Commitment doesn't compel us to do anything; it is inert. However, because of its binding or freezing properties, it does influence our response to other forces or situations that do compel us to do something." (p63)

Overview

In this chapter the period comprising the latter half of 1983 and the early part of 1984 is examined. Over these months John and Pat can be seen to have made certain decisions and taken specific actions that are of central importance in their practice of faith. These may be referred to as "committing acts" or "acts of commitment". The criteria for identifying acts of commitment are discussed, and an early example. The purpose of commitment is then addressed in considering what John and Pat were committing themselves to do. Factors that encouraged them in these acts are considered. This is followed by an analysis of two committing acts that were of importance at the beginning of John and Pat's practice of faith. Finally, the effects of commitment are considered in relation to the practice of faith and to other aspects of John and Pat's lives.

Criteria for Identifying Acts of Commitment

Kiesler (1971) has found that

"one may increase the degree of commitment by increasing one or

more of the following:

1. the explicitness of the act, e.g. how public...
2. the importance of the act for the subject...
3. the degree of irrevocability of the act...
4. the number of acts performed by the subject...
5. the degree of volition (or freedom or choice) perceived by the person in performing the act..." (p33)

The actions and events recorded below will be shown to evidence one or more of these characteristics.

At the time of Pat's healing both John and Pat did a number of things that were acts of commitment. As recorded earlier, the circumstances of Pat's healing had a powerful meaning for John and Pat. They were at the Christian holiday week, Spring Harvest, staying in one of the chalets of the holiday camp at which the event was run. Having had the unusual experience in the prayer meeting the night before, Pat awoke in the morning believing that she had been healed. Once she had walked around without pain and without a limp, they were convinced. Following this they performed a number of irrevocable acts, of their own free will, at times very publicly. These covered Kiesler's qualities for "acts of commitment" quite comprehensively. The first was John rushing in to tell their son, and the friend with whom Pete was sharing the room. Pat recalls,

"Our son Pete thought John had finally flipped his lid"

John explained

"I dived into their room and they were all still in bed and I shouted "Pat's been healed! Pat's been healed!"."

Shortly after that their actions were even more public: Pat remembers

"Part of the Spring Harvest team... Eric Delve... he'd seen how I was before... I went rushing up to him and threw my arms around his neck, saying "Eric, Eric, I've been healed! I've been healed!" jumping up and down."

This happened with a number of people that they knew. Then, with her new found freedom, Pat decided she wanted to do some exercise:

"I hadn't got any trousers with me because, frankly, my legs were too thick... anything tight made my legs worse... So, what I'd got was thick skirts and thick woolly tights which were warmest, so I went to Pop- Mobility wearing this skirt and thick tights... [John: "She was flashing her knickers to everyone!"] I went up to Sue Barnett afterwards and told her what had happened. She said "Oh, that's fantastic! I must tell Doug"."

Doug Barnett was one of the organisers of the week, and when he heard of Pat's healing he asked her to go up on to the stage at the last meeting to tell the four thousand Christians there what had happened:

"I went up on the stage - I've got that on tape actually"

John recalls

"Yes, that was amazing: the place was in uproar."

However, not all of the people that heard were as delighted, or as convinced as those at Spring Harvest. Returning back home to Saltash, they did not keep it quiet, but again shared their "good news" with those at their church. Pat said

"It was terrible. Nobody believed me. They said it was all in my

mind."

John added,

"One of the deacons at the church we had moved to in Saltash is a consultant surgeon in Plymouth, and he's a very nice guy and we're still in touch with him, but he just didn't believe that sort of thing happened... and yet this guy had seen her hobble around Saltash."

Pat continued,

"The minister in Saltash - it was exactly the same. And nobody would look at me, nobody would talk about it."

This was very difficult to take, and challenged what they believed had happened. Pat admitted

"Yes, I did doubt that I had been healed - when I got back to Saltash. I would wake up in the mornings wondering if I would still be okay, quite frequently, very frequently."

This sort of challenge to their faith was to be a regular affair later in their practice of faith. The means by which they coped with such pressures, and others, is addressed later in this chapter. However, they had committed themselves to their belief in Pat's healing by their acts at Spring Harvest and there was no turning back, even if they wanted to.

"Trust in God" and a Valued Direction

Before developing the analysis of committing acts that were performed it is appropriate to address the question of "Commitment to what?", drawing a summary of the previous chapters.

Following Pat's experience of healing, she felt a sense of purpose, that she had been healed for a reason.

"The moment of my healing... I knew I had been healed for a very special reason."

Pat recounts that this conviction of a sense of purpose was accompanied by repeatedly receiving a vision that she believes was from God. This vision was of John and Pat standing outside of a large building, and between them stood one of their old youth club members: a young man, called Shane, who had become a Christian as a result of their work in Southampton. Pat recalled:

"I remember spending June, July and August (1983) puzzling over these pictures, over what they meant...There was nothing dramatic about it really. Nothing devastating. It really fitted with everything we'd ever done."

That is, this vision did not seem to Pat to be a 'bolt out of the blue' (like, for example, the experience of Rousseau recorded earlier) but rather as something "fitting with everything" that had been there for a long time. It was interpreted as an expression of many of their closely held values, the values that were identified earlier. The values that had developed importance for John and Pat over the years had been expressed in "everything they'd ever done" in the years leading up to the summer of 1983. In Kelman's (1961) terms, this vision was readily "internalized", fitting with previously held values. This would have appealed to and enhanced the "critical meaning" that they attributed to these values, as well as enhancing the "transcendent meaning" of hearing from God.

Combined with the axiomatic experience of being healed, this "unusual vision" contributed to motivating John and Pat to seriously consider the possibility of setting up a residential home in Plymouth. Having laid the idea to one side when they were in Southampton, they began to get the confidence that "the time was now right". However, this was not a clear cut or easy decision. As Pat said above, they spent a number of months puzzling over the "meaning" of all of this: the meaning of her healing, the meaning of the vision, even the meaning of their lives and what they truly valued and wanted to accomplish with their lives. This may have been the "retrospective consideration" that Kiesler suggests will be the precursor to commitment, as argued at the end of the last chapter.

In terms of the analytical model of meaning used throughout this thesis, this may have involved a process of working through to a place of integrity between the three areas of meaning: experiential meaning being interpreted in terms of critical meaning, critical meaning altered to fit with transcendent meaning, transcendent meaning and experiential meaning enhancing one another, and so on.

The underlying meaning that was attached to this series of events was transcendent, that

"God was calling us to set up a residential home."

More than this, the meaning attributed by John and Pat was that God was calling them to a closer relationship with him, such that they would live their lives taking into account all that God had to say concerning what they should be doing. Pat reflected in the January of 1986, two years later,

"The greatest lesson has been to trust in God... in practical..."

emotional... and mental ways. Now we are prepared to say at the beginning "What has God got to say".

This formed the foundation of the practice of faith for John and Pat: that God was with them. Their faith was "in God" that God would actually intervene on their behalf, that he would perform acts when they were unable to perform them. Taking Pat's observation at face value, and I think subsequent actions support this interpretation, in terms of the model, we may conclude that the outcome of their reflections was an integrity of meaning that placed "transcendent meaning" as the dominant one of the three.

At times their faith had a particular focus, such as getting a house even when they had no money or paying bills without an income or helping a young person even when they did not understand what was wrong or what needed to be done; but their faith in all of this was that God would be acting with them so that they would succeed. To practice faith, for John and Pat, was to get on and do what they believed they had agreed with God, even where the appearance was that they could not or would not be able to perform the act. Their practice of faith was to recognise that God would perform the necessary acts.

John and Pat believed that God was with them. During the time in Saltash when no one believed that Pat had been healed, and relationships were breaking down because they were not being used to do the Youth work that they had moved from Southampton to do, Pat was given comfort by the evidence of God in their lives:

"It kept me going through the next two months... when the business with Saltash [Baptist church] came to a head and it was

awful. The one thing I could say was "Well, God is in it because he's healed me."... It made life much better."

This conviction that "God is with us" extended to provide confidence in other areas of their lives, notably in their confidence concerning their desire to establish a residential home. In Southampton the missing element for John and Pat in being motivated to establish a residential home in Southampton was the "ability to perform" (E-->P): they did not believe that they had the "vision or foresight" to do it, that it was "not the right time". With the evidence of healing John and Pat could believe that "God's power" was at work in them. They were then able to believe that God would be "able to do" what they asked of him if they were to attempt to establish a residential home.

It is not suggested that this situation constituted a "motivation to act" as Lawler terms it, although this is possible. The important factor for this thesis is that a criteria that had been missing was now available. The perspective or frame that is preferred by this thesis is that, rather than being "motivated to act" (which carries deterministic overtones), John and Pat were given an opportunity to choose to practice their faith. The meanings that they perceived in the situations, the reality that they were constructing, gave them a "creative opportunity" to try to attain a valued purpose. As far as the meaning of their lives was concerned, to establish a residential home was a valued direction. The "offered" route to attain this was the practice of faith in God.

Socialization and Testing Faith

Making this choice was not an easy, straightforward decision: there were

considerable implications for their lives and the lives of those around them (most notably their sixteen year old son, Pete). One of their fears, quite reasonably, was that it was "all in our minds", that they were deluding themselves. "Was it reasonable to consider acting in this way?". If they were wrong then they were not going to be able to perform the act: the criteria (E-->P) was not satisfied. These doubts needed to be overcome if they were to take the risk.

One way in which they attempted to test their course of action was by drawing on the experience of Gordon Wright and others that John and Pat had come to respect. This course would serve to enhance their "transcendent meaning", influenced by the respected other, and their "critical meaning" to the extent that others were able to provide reasoned argument for the sense of their actions. Gordon, in particular, had acted similarly in the early 1970s when he gave up his profession as an architect and established a charitable Christian organization known as "Crossline", and so could provide both forms of meaning.

John and Pat had come to know Gordon shortly after moving to Plymouth from Southampton in 1981. During her period of illness and infirmity, Pat started working with Gordon and the "Crossline" team. This organization provided a counselling service, including a telephone counselling service like the Samaritans, for the Plymouth area. Able to sit down for this work, Pat became involved as a counsellor.

Gordon, and others that John and Pat came to know, served as their "reference group", not only in providing working companionship, but in the sense that

"One can also use the reference group to increase one's knowledge of the world, or to facilitate evaluations of oneself and others... In this kind of group, the others are merely a standard which the person uses in making judgements about the world, others or himself. It has an informational function. In such a group the person will be concerned with the information he gathers from the group, to see if it is clear or ambiguous, if it is discrepant with his own cognitions, and if it is defined as he defines it." (Kiesler and Kiesler 1969) (p27)

John and Pat did not use Gordon and others as a source of initiatives, but as a facility to check their own cognitions. John and Pat were engaged in a process of "creative social research", just as Harre (1979) argues that all are "social scientists", although the ramifications of their conclusions were more significant than a lot of social research.

This process can be identified in the literature on socialization. Arguing from the symbolic interactionist tradition, Becker (1953) states that

"If a stable form of new behaviour is to emerge, a transformation of meanings must occur, in which the person develops a new conception of the nature of the object. This happens in a series of communicative acts in which others point out new aspects of his experience to him, present him with new interpretations of events, and help him achieve a new conceptual organization of his world, without which the new behaviour is not possible." (p240)

John and Pat had been experiencing a "transformation of meanings" as a

result of their experiences and developing construction and understanding of the world. Gordon and the other members of John and Pat's reference group were sought to help them to "achieve a new conceptual organization" of their world.

The reference group, in Kiesler and Kiesler's terms, was "clear" and "unambiguous", if a little tentative, in their support for John and Pat: they provided no "discrepant" cognitions, recognising that this was not an impossible state of affairs.

"Gordon just recommended that we did what we believed was right, and to do it a step at a time: not to rush, but to test our faith at each stage along the way. He was a great support through this period of time because he understood what it was we were going through, having done a similar thing himself."

Committing Acts

Their move from Southampton to Saltash had been an act of commitment to take up the youth work at Saltash Baptist Church: explicit, important, irrevocable, and freely performed. This had been carried out in the desire to do what God wanted them to be doing with their lives. Their declarations concerning Pat's healing were similarly committing. They were committed to the meaning in their life that God was with them and they wanted to carry on doing what they believed they heard God saying to them.

They were therefore not unfamiliar with the nature of the acts based upon a faith in God. Because of the way that they understood the task of establishing a residential home "in response to God's call", the main difference was one of the magnitude of the commitment, the greater extent to

which they were relinquishing control. As the following illustrations show, the acts that they chose to perform were even more irrevocable, more public, more important than those that they had performed before. Furthermore, the number of acts that they performed in line with the aim of establishing a residential house was greater: in many ways it constituted a rearrangement of their whole way of life.

For example, convicted of a need to sort out their financial affairs, John and Pat cut up all of their credit cards. In their own words this was a "symbolic" or "ceremonious act". Pat remembers

"... November/December time. That was the time when we realised we had to get our finances sorted out...We ceremoniously cut up our credit cards... Just a conviction from God that it had to go..."

Symbolism serves to enhance the meaning of the action, making it more powerful as a committing act. For example, Kiesler (1971) suggests

"that male puberty rites are designed to break the child's dependence on the mother. The rites break the binds of the past by producing new ultramasculine behaviour difficult to reconcile with any future interaction with older females."

The practicality of this act was that these credit facilities, although by no means over stretched, were a financial commitment that were anticipated to be a potential hindrance. They applied their efforts in the short term to remove this hindrance. With her new found health, Pat was able to sign on at the 'Nurses Bank', doing relief nursing work two or three times a week. The money from this was used to pay off the outstanding balance on the credit

cards.

To use Kiesler's terminology, this act served to "unbind" John and Pat from a commitment that they no longer wished to hold, whilst simultaneously bind them, perhaps psychologically and socially, even more strongly to their practice of faith.

This notion of "binding" fits well with Weick's notion of "coupling", concerned with the coupling of concepts or systems. Weick (1979b, 1976) and others (Glassman 1973, Astley 1985) concentrate largely upon the notion of "loose coupling", although it is recognised that both are of importance:

"It should be emphasised that looseness of coupling is relative." (Glassman 1973). (p87)

The act of commitment is concerned with tightening the couplings or bonds that exist between self and some behaviour. Glassman (1973) suggests that "commitment" is

"... that aspect of the decision making process which involves enhancement of activities within one motivational system plus the concomitant disengagement from, and persistence in the face of, influences from other systems." (p89)

The acts of commitment performed by John and Pat, like this act of cutting up credit cards, were not only binding them to certain behaviours, but also serving to loosen them, or unbind them, from other behaviours. Thus, almost paradoxically, this process of commitment is also a process of generating "freedom" for the individual. This was suggested above, in that the focus is not so much one of being motivated to practice faith but of being "free to

take the opportunity".

Two more acts served to further commit John and Pat in their course of action at this time: selling their house and John resigning from his job. Both of these were seen by John and Pat to be an important part of the means by which they would attain their goal of establishing a residential home.

At this time John and Pat believed that God would be providing them with a house almost immediately so that they could start the work. Prepared to use the money from the sale of their house in Saltash to go towards the purchase of a larger property, they began to look at Guest Houses and other dwellings with six or seven bedrooms. Placing their house on the market, they believed that God was going to provide the extra funds necessary for the work. They were unsure of the exact detail of the way ahead.

They entered into negotiations over a Guest House in the Devonport area of Plymouth. On top of the proceeds from the sale of their house, John and Pat needed some sixty thousand pounds to purchase the Guest House. It seemed possible that the money might come from an American based organization called Grapevine that was beginning to extend its operations in Britain. Gordon was able to arrange a meeting with a representative from Grapevine.

As it happened Grapevine was believed to be unsuitable for John and Pat's needs as the organization were not in the practice of funding new projects as John and Pat had been led to believe, but in providing the 'know-how' for setting up works funded by "Thrift Shops": turning a part of the purchased property into a shop that would be run as a profit making enterprise to support the purchase and operation of the residential home.

John and Pat were disappointed and a little disillusioned by this turn of events, not least because of the dashing of hopes that had been raised because of misinformation. Support from others, most notably Gordon who had taken similar radical action in setting up Crossline, served to help John and Pat through this difficult period of beginning to put their faith into practice.

The situation at the beginning of 1984 was certainly no easy initiation to their work. John and Pat were faced with no readily apparent source of finance for the purchase of the Guest House, and a house that was still on the market.

With advice from Gordon, they decided to ask God to provide at least the deposit of some six thousand pounds by the following weekend, or they would assume that they should break off negotiations for the Guest House. The weekend came and went, and no money was received. As a result they contacted their solicitor to inform him of their decision to cease negotiations for the Guest House. At the time that John and Pat severed negotiations for the Guest House, the solicitor asked if they still wished to continue with the sale of their house. Even knowing that they would not be purchasing a Home in the near future

"... we still felt totally committed to the idea of moving to Plymouth... it wasn't so much "selling the house" as "moving to Plymouth". Our life in Saltash had come to an end."

The decision to sell their house was thus closely linked to the perceived need to move from Saltash into the centre of Plymouth. Saltash is a quiet, Cornish town with a completely different style of life to the neighbouring

City of Plymouth. The young people who John and Pat wished to help were in Plymouth. Living in Saltash John and Pat had found themselves geographically separated from their "place of work" and amassing substantial petrol costs travelling back and forwards to Plymouth. As well as the financial element of high travel costs, this geographical separation was a hindrance both practically and psychologically: "Our life in Saltash had come to an end". The "critical meaning" of moving had developed a considerable strength, such that disappointment in "transcendent meaning" (God not providing the money) did not serve to stop them from moving.

However, "critical meaning" had not taken the dominant role, as they still believed that God was telling them to sell the house and for John to give up his job. Pat recalls, for example, that they did not even consider the possibility of buying a family home:

"We never thought of buying a house in Plymouth. It was about that time that we believed John would be giving up his job. I believed it would be the end of the financial year - in fact it was a month later..."

Although moving was not directly related to John giving up his job, the options concerning that move were related. John and Pat believed that this was an essential act in the pursuit of their goal. It was also performed "in faith" that God was encouraging it.

This was a committing act for them both, particularly in consideration of the fact that there was little to compel them to take this course of action. For example, John suggests that the reason that he gave up his job was because they "had a feeling" that this was what God wanted to do. Unlike a

"vision" or an "axiomatic experience" of healing, which by their very nature involve the construed exercise of power on God's part, they were free to accept or reject this feeling. Experiential meaning results from the experience of power, and so any response is not one of choice or private acceptance (Kiesler 1971), but one of compliance. If this were so for all of their acts at this time, John and Pat may have been less committed to their actions. As it was, this act of giving up John's job was experienced as "freely chosen". Without the strong influence of any axiomatic experiences directly related to the act, it was an act that evidenced considerable volition on their part. Although John "had a feeling", there was little that they could do to place the onus of responsibility on anyone else: "they only had themselves to blame". This was an act with a high degree of volition. This act was also important and relatively irrevocable, at least in the short term. Furthermore it was public. In fact, Pat recalls that

"John gave up his job... It's the one thing that has caused most criticism... Even Gordon, he's surprised we've even got premises."

They argue however that this was important for their work. Pat said that:

"It has welded us together... it's been a time of teaching... we spent time with people that we wouldn't have been able to spend."

John added,

"We've learned from other organizations by being free to go to them when the opportunity arose..."

In summary, Pat suggested,

"We may have got the timing out of kilter, I'm open to that, but I think basically God did want us to have the time... A lot of

the meetings about setting up this sort of house, about working with young people, we've done a lot of going to places like Spring Harvest, John Wimber, John's been to Bible College for three months. It's all given us an incredibly firm foundation."

This is a good example of the effect of commitment: despite receiving the worst criticism of any of their acts, even from their referent group including Gordon, John and Pat maintained a "critical meaning" that was consistent with the acts that they took.

Effects of Commitment

It has been argued that the result of performing committing acts is to bind the individual to certain behaviours, whilst loosening the coupling with other behaviours. This may be seen, mechanistically, as the "result". However, what are the practical implications in the lives of the actors concerned? What are the effects. Two are identified and discussed below; the first being to "make an act less changeable", which, in this instance, is to make the faith of the actor less susceptible to weakening. The Victorian terminology is a "steadfast faith", evoking the imagery of their sailing ships at sea which, if "sure and steadfast", could cope with the pounding of the wind and waves of a storm.

The second effect results from the same events, but seen from a different perspective: pressure. To continue the analogy, the occupants of the ship at sea that is "sure and steadfast" will experience a terrible buffeting in a storm. Indeed, any large wave that is not going in the same direction will deal a severe blow to the ship if it connects.

1) Steadfast Faith

Kiesler (1971) makes a number of assumptions about commitment with the aim of facilitating critical discussion. With relevance to the practice of faith, the most important of these assumptions is that

"The effect of commitment is to make an act less changeable...Commitment also makes the cognition representing the behaviour more resistant to change as well... The degree of commitment tells us how closely some behaviour is tied to self and how easily it is to dispense with if necessary. To "unbind" himself the person might deny to himself and others his having behaved that way, or he might reinterpret the act, compartmentalizing it and divorcing it from other behaviour and belief, or he might change the implications of the act for self, perhaps asserting that he was forced to act that way. However, to the extent that a person is bound to some explicit and attitudinally relevant behaviour, he must accept it as integral to himself, to his self-view, and other attitudes and beliefs must be accommodated accordingly." (p31)

Having become committed to a faith, this quality of "unchangeability" is important if the faith is to persist. This is because the believer will subsequently be faced with many alternatives which will challenge the belief that has been accepted. Faith is characterised by a persisting uncertainty to the outsider, whilst a certainty of what cannot be seen is evident in the believer. Even this doubt that others express concerning the object of the faith will serve to challenge the believer's resolve, for the reasons of socialization outlined above.

On top of this, the evidence of the believer's own eyes will argue against the faith: other routes will appear more attractive, more suitable, and the present faith can appear too illusive, a mistake. But for the unchangeable position to which the believer has come as a result of the previous committing acts, the faith would be susceptible to being discarded.

Having committed themselves to their faith, John and Pat now had to practice it. The importance of commitment in mitigating against change, in any of the ways that Kiesler notes above, is exemplified in John and Pat's experience. The effectiveness in committing John and Pat was summed up by John in the January of 1986 as he was reflecting on how they had coped with some of their most difficult times:

"When Pat's on a downer, almost invariably I've been going up, and when I've been going down Pat's been going up and so we've been able to support each other through the difficult troughs. However, there have been a couple of occasions when we've both been on a downer together and if it hadn't been for our circumstances - that is, we have no money, no home, no resources, no nothing - we'd have been out of it by now. That's no depth of faith; I mean it's just God putting us in a position where we just couldn't do anything else: we had to carry on. You see, we've burnt all our bridges behind us - there's no way we can turn around and achieve what we had two years ago - because, believe me, if we could have done, we would have done, wouldn't we?"

Pat replied,

"Yes, there have been times when we've said we'd do it. Whether we actually would have done, I don't know."

2) Pressures and Coping with Pressure

It was argued above that in committing themselves to their faith, John and Pat were binding themselves to a particular way of living, unbinding themselves from their previous ways. John expressed this when he commented:

"It's very binding if you have to live the same way as everybody else in the world: going out to work for a job and that sort of thing; it's the accepted norm and we're out of the accepted norm."

This 'oddness' proved difficult for many people to cope with. It was noted above that telling people of Pat's healing, John and Pat found it difficult when faced with doubt. Furthermore, this developed into the experience of being ignored and passed by in the street. Similarly, difference in values and priorities generated forms of conflict in John and Pat's relationships with people. Pat believes that this conflict arose from the sense of challenge that others experienced when faced by John and Pat's lives:

"To some extent we have challenged people without saying a single word: just by the fact that we have turned our priorities upside down, and our standards."

and further,

"The difference between us creates the uneasiness."

In some way it seemed impossible for some to ignore what John and Pat were doing, and if they were unable to agree then they were sometimes compelled to disagree. With some this lead to confrontation:

"Two years ago it upset us both if people got nasty over what we were doing and saying how stupid we were..."

"One of the most difficult things is coping with being..."

treated as a freak - and to some extent that includes my family... my mother... thinks I'm a bit of a nutcase."

With others, there were different responses:

"If they don't want to face up to it, what's the easiest way not to? That's not to see or have anything to do with us."

This was difficult for John and Pat to cope with, and put pressure upon them to change. However, they were committed and so changing was not an easy option. Pat believes they learned to cope:

"I'm not saying we don't care about people who avoid us now, but it's become very nominally important - it still hurts but we just go on anyway... it's come to be unimportant... it's ceased to have the value that it had."

Thus, one aspect of effectively standing in faith is the continued re-prioritization of values. This process of reassessing cognitions, feelings and behaviours in order to fit with the way of life that they had committed themselves to is the same as was necessary before their first committing acts, when they were deciding whether to commit themselves or not.

Uncertainty was sometimes another source of pressures. Apter (1982) argues that uncertainty can be a source of great discomfort when the actor is in certain states of mind (although it can be a stimulus at other times). However, even when they found it difficult not knowing what would be happening next, committed to their faith, John and Pat were prepared to accept whatever came their way, until it became evident the route that they should take themselves.

Along with the continued reprioritization of values, a second source of strength to cope with the pressures was the support of others.

With the benefit of hindsight it is possible to see that the impact of Pat's healing on those organising the event served to establish relationships that have proven of great significance in the events since that time. The organisers of the Spring Harvest events, at which Pat had been healed, were to provide similar support throughout their endeavours. As Pat commented:

"There have been times when to know that [the Spring Harvest team]... had a burden from God to be interested in what we were doing, to demonstrate in practical ways, spend time with us... has certainly made us say that "God must be in it" when we have begun to doubt what we are doing..."

The trauma of criticism from others, particularly people like Karen who had spent time working closely with John and Pat, was very damaging. Support was vital at times like this:

"[The support from the Spring Harvest team] certainly helped me to get over the trauma of Karen who said that we were out of the will of God...Also the support of people like Mary... Alan Strike who has spent time praying for us... I don't believe that people of that calibre would not have picked something up."

Another method of coping with the difficulties that they faced in their day to day work was to keep sight of their original objective, their "founding purpose". As emphasised above, this was in building a relationship with God, in having faith in God. That purpose obtained an 'operational focus' in the form of the quest for a house large enough to perform residential work.

However, this quest was never intended to be the sole purpose of their work; merely an important goal and a major first expression of the overall purpose. This major purpose was less easily knocked by those around them or by the eventuality of unfavourable circumstances.

On a number of occasions John and Pat slipped into allowing the house to become "the end in itself" but they persisted in reproving themselves. Before they bought the House during one of the times that the circumstances were not looking too good, Pat said

"I have come to the position of not worrying if we get the house or not: it is not the most important thing, it is only one means to an end."

In Cleeve Gardens, they recognised this error, as John commented

"We got to the point where we realised God was saying "You start the work and I'll provide the house."

This is a common process, as identified by Allport (1937), who argued that certain behaviours develop their own motive power or "functional autonomy" having developed value on their own: the means become ends in themselves. This is linked to the theoretical notion of secondary reinforcement (Keller 1969, Ferster and Skinner 1957, Uhl and Young 1967).

The purpose was more a "way of life" than a particular, tangible, readily definable goal. In this sense the purpose contained many values. This intangibility contributed to the occasional error of making the house an "end", because it was easier (and more secure?) to describe to people, it was easier to pin down as "what they were doing with their lives". However,

in doing so they became more vulnerable to criticism, and to self-doubt, when the house was not attained.

The acts of commitment that John and Pat were to take were not carried out for that purpose: the aim was not primarily to say "Look everybody, we are now committing ourselves to this as a way of life". The ostensible purpose was the attainment of their vision: setting up a residential house for young people. This involved identifying actions that they believed would bring this about. However, there is a sense in which these acts were also to serve the purpose of declaring publicly that John and Pat were acting on their faith.

John vividly describes the effect of this period on their lives:

"I think we were aware [during the summer of 1983] that this was going to mean a big change, but I don't think we were aware of the enormity of the change...Nobody in their right mind would have started but it's a bit like being on a toboggan going over the brow of a hill: once you've started you can't stop."

As a description of commitment, one can hardly better the imagery of a toboggan going over the brow of the hill.

A fourth means of coping with the difficulties, was the continuation of unusual events, axiomatic experiences. They were able to convince themselves of the truth in what they were doing by reference to these experiential axioms, even where cultural axioms were being flouted.

At the beginning of 1984 the pace of change that John and Pat were

experiencing could only be described as "frightening". Certainly, John described his response to the decision to go ahead and sell the house as

"Sheer and utter panic. I had no coherent thoughts... I spent a lot of time on the loo - getting a lot of things off my mind."

The humour belies the seriousness of the situation. Their house was already under offer and the future promised no easy or obviously sensible means of housing themselves, particularly if John was to be giving up his work. Their responsibility as parents did not weigh lightly upon them:

"There was [our son] Pete running around asking us if we'd got a tent. He was absolutely terrified..."

Coping with this depended upon an unswerving conviction that they were doing the right thing: they believed utterly that God had called them to this purpose. This applied not only to the general direction but also specifically to the sale of their house. Some of the strength of this conviction about the house came from the way in which the prospective sale of their house had come about.

At this time John was employed as a nurse at a local private hospital, and while the house was on the market he had to attend a training course in Birmingham for two weeks. While he was there, Pat developed an overwhelming burden that their house was being handled by the wrong estate agent. Thinking that she was going mad, she summoned up the courage to talk to Gordon Wright and some other close friends from the Crossline team, Mike and Ann Corry. Their advice was to approach John about changing estate agents, given that God knew who were on their lists. Over the phone John agreed, even though the new estate agent would cost an extra two hundred pounds.

The house had been on the market for about six weeks, with half a dozen similar properties on sale in the same road. As a confirmation that they were right in what they were doing in selling the house John and Pat prayed that the sale would go through quickly and for the asking price. Within three days of changing estate agents Pat received a phone call from a man one hundred and fifty miles away in Portsmouth, asking for details of the house. When Pat had described the property the gentleman, never having seen it, said that he would take it, offering the asking price. Stunned, Pat suggested that it might be a good idea if he discussed this with his wife first. In agreement on this point, he went away, only to phone a short while later to confirm the offer that he had made. Pat accepted. John doubted that the sale would go through to completion, but the process continued smoothly from then on.

This remarkable event, in stark contrast to the prevailing market conditions and to the norms of house purchase, gave impetus to their faith that they were correct in selling their house.

A further impetus to their faith for the project as a whole came three days after contracts had been exchanged on their house, when the family was most anxious about where they would be living.

John received a phone call from a man, named Hywell Jones, from Plymouth. They had never met, but Hywell had heard about John and Pat from one of his Sunday School pupils, and had become aware that they were shortly to be homeless. Only a short while before, Hywell had purchased a small three bedroomed ex-council house on the Lower Ham estate of Plymouth. He did not need it for himself as he lived in a flat attached to the local Baptist

church where he was the lay-pastor. He had wanted a greater Christian influence on the estate and had purchased the house with a vague notion of it housing a Christian family. On hearing about John and Pat, he believed that God wanted him to offer them the property, rent free, for as long as they wished.

Pat was out at the time, doing some nursing relief work, and John recalls sitting in an armchair trembling uncontrollably after the phone call. When Pat arrived home, John met her before she was in the door.

John and Pat went to look over the house, and although it was no palace and they believed too small for any residential work, John and Pat accepted that it was from God. Accepting Hywell's offer they believed it would serve as a temporary stop over before they moved into larger premises.

"We'll only be here for six weeks" they said.

Over the next three years in the house their son quoted them on numerous occasions. However, this did not detract from the power that this experience had in strengthening their conviction that God was with them and that their faith was correct.

Summary

Commitment

Commitment serves to "bind" the individual to behavioural acts. Commitment occurs through acts that have one or more of the following characteristics: explicit, important, irrevocable, numerous (repeated), and freely chosen.

John and Pat performed a number of such acts and became inextricably "bound"

to their faith in a present, powerful and active God. Incrementally their commitment to such faith led them into the performance of still more committing acts that reflected their faith in establishing a residential house for young people. The acts of selling their house and of John giving up his job were explicit, important, irrevocable, and freely chosen. Coupled with the numerous other, but less profound, acts John and Pat bound themselves very tightly indeed to their practice of faith.

The direction of their behaviour was emphasised as having arisen from John and Pat's values that have been discussed in preceding chapters: the care of young people, a developing relationship with God, and the prominent strategic objective of establishing a residential house.

The motivation came from a "trust in God", that God would provide the necessary capacity or power to achieve their desired ends. The axiomatic experience of Pat's healing was important in this.

Their acts of commitment to these directions were not taken immediately: John and Pat spent a number of months pondering "the meaning of all this"; notably the meaning of Pat's healing and of the vision that Pat had of them outside of a large house.

Working through this meaning, reflecting and considering over the summer and autumn of 1983, the support of others was important in testing their ideas and helping them to come to a place of growing confidence.

Finally, at the end of the year, the time for decision had come. Having considered the incentives in the manner outlined at the end of the last

chapter, John and Pat chose to commit themselves. They embarked upon the committing acts of sorting out their finances, selling their house, moving to Plymouth and John giving up his job.

The effects of commitment are simply to "bind" the individual; to provide, in this case, a robust faith that is unchangeable. This, as argued in the following chapter, is a foundation in the practice of faith giving time for the power to work to create the desired results.

One of the less pleasant ramifications that was observed was the experience of pressure. John and Pat found conflict and disagreement with others a particularly strong social pressure. A number of methods for coping with this were observed: reprioritizing values (reorganizing the means-end network of critical meaning), gaining the support of others, and the reaffirmation of their purpose. The fourth means was arguably out of their control but still provided a means of coping: the continuation of unusual, axiomatic, experiences.

The meaning that had developed for John and Pat culminated in the committing choices of the winter of 1983. The practice of their faith outlined in the following chapter was an expression of the process that had led to this point.

PART FOUR

THE NATURE OF FAITH IN PRACTICE

CHAPTER 10

THE POWER OF FAITH

One of the reasons for practising faith is that it can be important in bringing about desired results: "faith beforehand in an uncertified result is the only thing that makes the result come true." (James 1904). John and Pat wanted to achieve some goals and objectives that were important to them, and it was through their faith that they expected to succeed. This is an aspect of faith that parallels the notion of power which, when exercised, may similarly bring about uncertified and otherwise unattainable results. There is power in faith.

However, faith is not the type of power that is generally given the term power in the literature. Some writers have attempted to define the notion of power. Bell (1975), for example, suggests communications that express power "involve either threats or promises of the form "If you do X, I will do Y"." (p21)

However, Arendt (1970) suggests that

"Power corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert." (p44)

Thus, for Arendt power is consensual rather than an expression of an authority-subordinate communications.

More in keeping with Bell and others (Bacharach and Baratz 1970, French and Raven 1959), Lukes (1974) argues that views of power, such as that expressed by Arendt,

"focus on the locution "power to", ignoring "power over". Thus power indicates a 'capacity', a facility, an ability rather than a relationship. Accordingly the conflictual aspect of power, the fact that it is exercised over people - disappears altogether from view. And along with it there appears the central interest of studying power relations in the first place - an interest in the (attempted or successful) securing of people's compliance by overcoming or overting the opposition." (p31)

It is the notion of "power to" that is related to the practice of faith. "Power to" is suggested by Lukes to be a "capacity", a "facility", an "ability". What might be termed a potential to perform an act. Lukes (1974) argues that such

"... cases of co-operative activity, where individuals or groups significantly affect one another in the absence of a conflict of interests between them... [are] cases of 'influence' but not of 'power'." (p32)

It has been argued that faith will arise from critical and transcendent meaning, both of which may come from social influence, but not from the exercise of "power over". The latter leads to compliance, not faith. In the same way, the practice of faith is concerned with "capacity" to reach desired goals, rather than as a means of exercising power over others.

However, just as experiential meaning is an experience of "power over",

faith can be used as "power over" others. The practice of faith can, and often does, lead to a conflict of interests. This is not the benefit of faith that is concentrated upon in this thesis; indeed, it is problem of the conflict arising from faith practised as "power over" that is addressed in chapter 11.

Faith, however, is power. It is power to influence. The nub of the relationship between faith and influence is the sociality of individuals, that people "significantly affect one another" as Lukes suggests, "in the absence of a conflict of interests."

Summarising the points that have been made in the development of the story and theory so far, it is in this context that we may suggest that faith is "power to":

1. keep on pressing towards desired goals, despite difficulties and problems that arise.

Kanter (1988) suggests a maxim for entrepreneurs, that "everything looks like a failure in the middle". This, she says, is "predictable" from the outset. Faith is power to keep going even when the situation looks like a failure;

2. work diligently at the task in hand, drawing upon the motivation that comes from the three sources of meaning, critical, transcendent and experiential;

3. inspire others, who will be caught by the energy and excitement of the project.

It is in the nature of people to desire to achieve (Maslow 1954, Herzberg

1968) and the presence of individuals practising faith will provide an opportunity for others to share in the possible achievement;

4. keep direction despite distractions,

because faith, almost by definition, is single minded. The actor is taking the risks in the first place because the goal is very important. The result is that faith stays on track. Where this is dependable, others will be more inclined to support the activity, because the goal is more likely to be achieved as stated, rather than modified to a great extent along the way;

5. do what you want to do, rather than what you have to do.

In terms of personal fulfilment the payoff can be great, working for yourself, achieving the things that are of importance to you;

6. provide leadership,

embodying a meaningful purpose addressed in a confident manner;

7. take a risk,

allowing the pursuit of a goal or activity even when many of the "facts" are unknown or uncertain;

8. work with others,

because even when you do not understand or perhaps agree with them, because it is not unreasonable as a strategy to have faith in them and let understanding develop later.

This chapter concentrates on telling some of the most important episodes in John and Pat's practice of faith, demonstrating that their faith was power

to make otherwise uncertified results come true.

A Theoretical Framework

The analysis of this thesis so far has suggested a number of areas that are of importance in the practice of faith. These can form a theoretical framework that provides a useful way of looking at the events that are recorded. Before reading the story that is told in this chapter it is worthwhile summarising this framework.

An action perspective has been suggested as best describing the approach that is the practice of faith, that "action arises out of meaning" (Silverman 1972). This aspect of the practice of faith, the action that arises out of meaning, is well illustrated by Kierkegaard's dictum

"Life must be lived forwards but it can only be understood backwards."

The action that was John and Pat's practice of faith was not dependent upon the process of understanding but upon trust in the source of their faith, in this case God. God was their primary source of "transcendent meaning", and interpreted as the source of their "experiential meaning", through which their "critical meaning" was derived and modified. This meaning has been argued to have two main components: a valued direction, V, and a belief in the power or capacity to achieve the desired outcome, (E-->P) and (P-->O).

John and Pat's practice of faith began with meaning that was converted or "grounded" into behaviour through choice and acts of commitment, such as selling their house and John giving up his job. These acts served to "bind" John and Pat to the set of behaviours that constituted their practice of

faith. It has been suggested that this commitment promotes an "unchangeability" in the behaviour, making it resistant to influence.

Beginning

In earlier chapters we saw that one operational direction for John and Pat was embodied in the goal of establishing a residential house in which they could seek to provide a "caring family" environment for the young women who they believed would benefit from such a facility. In the process of finding and acquiring such a property John and Pat had to practice faith: from the outset because they were aware that they were severely short of finance and had little idea where the money to purchase the property would come from, and throughout the process because of the besetting circumstances that they confronted. Faith involved setting off to achieve a desired goal and keeping going when they did not know what to do.

This part of the story concentrates on the project of establishing a residential house. This covers the period from late 1983 when John and Pat were expecting to buy a five bedroom Guest House to the middle of 1987 when they moved in to 78, Durnford Street, the house that was eventually provided for their use.

In the December of 1983 and January of 1984 John and Pat were negotiating to buy a Guest House while they were selling their home in Saltash. They did not have the money to buy the Guest House, but their understanding was that God would provide them with the money. John recalls:

"We still thought at that time that we would be moving straight into the Guest House. Even when we moved into Cleeve Gardens we thought it was only going to be for a short time. I remember

saying to our Pete "We'll only be here six weeks". In the end we were there just over three years."

They ceased negotiating for the Guest House when they failed to receive sufficient money to place a deposit, taking advice from Gordon. This part of the story was told in more detail in an earlier chapter. In the early part of 1984 John and Pat carried on selling their own house and moved to a house in Cleeve Gardens, Plymouth. This experience with the Guest House was unnerving for John and Pat: "they had their fingers burned", having believed that it was the right place (P-->O) and that God would have enabled them to purchase it (E-->P). When the deal fell through their understanding was challenged as being wrong.

The question that they faced was, "Was this true of their faith, overall?". This challenge was to the "critical meaning" that they had ascribed to the events. However, because their faith was based primarily in the "transcendent meaning" that they held, their faith was not rocked completely. Of this time, Pat commented,

"God had not told us that this was "the house", in the same way that he had given me the vision. It had just seemed like an ideal house, and I suppose we rushed ahead of God, expecting him to follow."

For this reason, their transcendent meaning was not challenged, and, as Pat's comment indicates, they successfully re-organized the means-end network of their critical meaning in order to cope with the dissonance of the experience.

Wary of rushing into any more premature negotiations they concentrated on their move to Cleeve Gardens and beginning to work with young people through their contacts with Crossline and local churches. John finished work in the April, about the same time that Lynn Clack came to work with them. Lynn had met John and Pat the summer before, just as Pat and John were determining that they would start their venture in faith. Lynn had been interested and decided that she wanted to help.

Concerned about what they should do about finding suitable premises for the work, they asked God what to do. Pat recalls,

"God said to us "You start the work and I'll provide the house".

So that's what we did."

The three of them began to develop contacts with churches and groups throughout the City offering their services to help young people. One of the main contacts was Pat's work as a counsellor at Gordon's organization, Crossline. Over this period of time they also used a large proportion of the funds from the sale of John and Pat's house in purchasing equipment for use in the work. This included a minibus and various items of musical equipment. This met with criticism from a number of quarters, and in retrospect John and Pat believe that they made a number of mistakes in their haste to establish the work.

In terms of the model of meaning, their mistakes were due to insufficient emphasis upon critical meaning. Their critical meaning was weak in contrast to their transcendent or experiential meaning. Greater strength would have come in their faith if they could have developed their critical approach to a similar level. However, mistakes are a part of any learning process, and

it is no derogatory criticism of their practice of faith to suggest areas of weakness.

At this time I had chatted with them about what they were doing, and was excited by their vision and faith. They asked me to come and work with them, and after a number of months deliberating, it was just too good an opportunity to miss and so I joined them in the July of 1984.

At this time there was still no sign of the money being provided. The work with young people underway, it was decided to begin searching for a suitable property. It was reasoned that we would be in a more powerful position to inspire and persuade a potential backer that the project was feasible if a suitable house had already been found.

Searching for a Property

In practical terms, our practice of faith was little different to any 'normal' attempt to find and purchase a property. It was just that we had no money. Pat recalled,

"We went through the usual estate agents... and to be honest with you, most of the times in the first few months we concentrated on houses that were a wreck that would need doing up. You know, eight bedrooms for thirty thousand pounds because in need of gutting...

Their initial approach was conservative, within the constraints of "limited finance". This was a rational approach, given the decision to proceed. Their understanding was that God wanted them to establish a residential home. Within this purview they went about the task in the way that they thought

would bring about the vision. However, this was modified by hearing from God through Gordon. This is referred to by Pat as "prophecy", where someone believes that they hear God saying something and speaks it out. Pat recalls:

"Gordon was praying for us and then he prophesied: "The house that I give you will be ready for use."

John and Pat believed that God was speaking to them and so changed their approach. In accepting this they recognised that they would require a greater sum of money for the initial purchase of the property. However, they believed that God would have to provide this as he had told them to expect a house that was ready for use, rather than in need of major repair. They did not understand where this extra money would come from, and so it was more of a problem that before (critical meaning "down"), but they believed that God would have to provide it (transcendent meaning "up").

This left them to search for a house, with certain criteria in mind: "It had to be in Plymouth, somewhere near the city centre and the dole office. Actually, apart from looking for something big enough we didn't really know precisely what we were looking for until we found it. We looked at a number of places, most in the centre of Plymouth but a couple further out."

The first house that we looked at, in October 1984, was a very large property that had been a nursing home. It was to be sold "By Tender", so we did not know the price, but as we had no money this was not really a problem. In terms of our understanding at the time, the house seemed ideal. Some notes that I made at the time indicated the extent to which we had developed our "critical meaning" in terms of determining what we were looking for:

Location:
central Plymouth

Structure:
facilities sufficient for day work/music ministry/residential work;
sectioned off staff rooms
large number (ample) rooms
sound repair
fire preventions already intact

Function:
suitable for young men (NB still the focus of our attention at this time)

Layout:
lends itself to the work

Visions: (the visions that God had given Pat of the property)
kitchen door on right
white house
grass at front
"in readiness" (Gordon's prophecy)

All of these served to make this property seem ideal. However,

Finance:
unknown price
not forthcoming as yet
required within one month

All of us liked this house. However, nothing came of it.

The next house that we looked at was "Cartuther Mill" in the November of that year. Some of the positive aspects of the property that we determined were:

Atmosphere:
a homely feel
"like the Hyde" (Colin Urquhart's property that John and Pat visited)

Location:
away from it all
secluded
providing security and a clean break
BUT not central Plymouth - 5 miles out.

Function:
gardens/land: acreage good for activities
suitable for young women rather than men
slight problem with day work - inaccessible

Finance:
no apparent time pressure

one hundred and twenty thousand pounds
letter from potential backer arrived two days later

Although we kept contact and investigated particular avenues, we did not press hard to buy it. The same happened with another property, Gratton, shortly afterwards. It was easy to find good reasons and arguments why all of these were appropriate. However, the critical meaning never stirred us to take any leaps of faith. We never really believed that we could buy them [(E-->P) = 0] However, in December we saw 78, Durnford Street.

78, Durnford Street

The house that we went to view in Durnford Street fitted the general picture that we were developing for the sort of house that would be appropriate. Although near to the centre of the city, it was on the estuary with commanding views over the coast. This was to be the house that we eventually obtained for the work. After moving in and starting the work, Pat reflected on that initial viewing:

"The fact that it was in such a nice place was pleasant, but it was a bit near to Union Street ['Red Light District', sailors and night clubs] I always thought, and that has proved to be a slight problem."

All of us felt excited about the house because in many ways it seemed ideal; certainly the best that we had seen so far. Moreover, John and Pat had some unusual experiences whilst in the house. After looking around the house, we were discussing the suitability of the house and during this time John and Pat shared their experiences. Later John described these experiences,

"It was very interesting because Pat got a 'feeling' when she was in the house looking around the first time that we saw it.

In fact, God said to her, "This is the place".

"I was coming up the stairs, it was dead quiet... and as I came toward the top of the flight of stairs, I heard laughter coming up the stairs, and I knew there was nobody in the house and I believe that was God just saying, "This is going to be a house filled with laughter and happiness - it's not going to be a morbid place." I was quite blown by that because I'd never had an experience like that before."

We came to the conclusion that this was the house.

PAT "Afterwards we really felt very strongly that God was saying, "That is the place. Don't go wasting any more time or energy looking at other buildings, just concentrate on that place", which is what we did."

In this case, as with the practice of their faith up to this point, it was "transcendent" and "experiential meaning" that led them to the point of being prepared to commit themselves. In combination with critical meaning, the factors of suitability ($P \rightarrow O$), and importance, V , were there, and the influence of God gave the confidence ($E \rightarrow P$) that this was the one to go for.

Negotiating to Buy and Other Positive Steps

It was all very well deciding that this was the place but it seemed that something needed to be done: this "feeling" or meaning had to be grounded in action if anything was to happen. For want of a better idea we made an offer. John recalled,

"It was on offer for ninety thousand pounds... and of course we

didn't have a penny. Having believed that this was the place for us, we negotiated to buy the place... We told the owner, Mrs T., that we didn't have a penny towards it and that we had to raise the money... She said, "I accept your offer, but I'll leave it on the market", which we said was fair enough."

In some ways it seemed ridiculous to be negotiating to buy the house: it was the Guest House all over again. Committing ourselves to this course of action was a risk, if only that we might end up with egg on our faces, looking fools. We recognised that this risk extended to Mrs T. in accepting our offer and so we felt it only right to put her in the picture.

In other ways we also believed that what we were doing was quite reasonable and sensible: this was the way that we would get the house. As a result we continued to approach the possible purchase of the house "as though we had the money". In this way we would be ready to buy and start work as soon as possible once the money appeared. Pat remembers,

"We first saw the house the first week in December 1984.

"During this time we started taking positive steps about the house. For instance, we had to get a 'Change of Use' certificate: we knew nobody would buy the place without a 'Change of Use' thing. So we approached the council... We also got a survey done by Mike F. He did a very very full survey plus applying for the 'Change of Use' certificate as a donation to the work - which at the time was devastating to us. This would cost several hundred pounds which was an awful lot of money to us at the time. When we asked him how much we owed him, he said he didn't want anything.

"We had to get people to recommend us for using this place: Gordon, several ministers, a social worker, a community project worker, a councillor, a cross-section of people."

Over the year we had been building up contacts with people throughout the City of Plymouth. This had included approaching well-known figures in the churches and council to form a "Council of Reference". In general people were interested and sympathetic to the whole idea, often impressed by John and Pat's dedication and concern. Financial support was not great but people were prepared to back the idea and John and Pat with verbal support.

We applied for "change of use" and it went before the planning committee at the council. We heard later from a journalist friend that the process through which this was granted was "remarkable".

The local residents association in Durnford Street had objected strongly to the application on the grounds that there were already a number of "Homes" in the area. This was a reasonable objection as the area was residential, and the residents were concerned that they were going to be "overrun". When this objection was raised one councillor stood on his feet and forcefully stated,

"If we take notice of every objection from residents in this City then we'll never do anything to improve the facilities in Plymouth."

His comments were met with noises of approval, and permission was granted with little more discussion. It was this that caused Pat to say,

"Miraculously we got change of use..."

However, Pat continued,

"... but we still hadn't got the money. We went to Clive C. for advice on how to get money. He said that Mission England and the appeal from Ethiopia had run the Christian coffers dry. He said, "Frankly, you don't stand a chance without a miracle".

Clive was the director of the Evangelical Alliance, a prominent national Christian organization that acted as an umbrella organization for the evangelical churches in the UK. Clive had been one of the organizers at Spring Harvest when Pat had been healed. He had taken an interest in their work and had tried to support them as much as he could. John and Pat had a lot of respect for his opinion.

Raising Finance

In applying for "change of use" early in 1985 we had prepared a document outlining the purpose and manner of the work, including a financial statement appraising operating viability. For the first time this gave us a clear idea of the overall financial needs of the work. Projected start-up costs were in excess of one hundred thousand pounds. From the beginning of 1985 we set about trying to raise the necessary capital in earnest. John explains,

"We wrote to lots of Christian Trust... At the time we also had a talk with Anne T. from Care Trust... and Charlie C. of Care Campaigns, the political wing of Care, considered our project... but Care believed that money should come from the local church, and that certainly wasn't going to happen in Plymouth."

These were desperate months as every door that we pushed seemed to lead

nowhere. On more than one occasion we travelled up to London chasing leads that offered hope, some reasonable, some a mere "clutching at straws". Pat described the situation as a question of just "hanging on" to what they believed:

"... all those months since we saw the house we were really standing on God's word - and it was about July (1985) that the tide began to turn..."

Their faith enabled, or empowered, them to persist despite an almost total absence of encouragement concerning finance. At many times the project "looked like a failure" during this "middle" period.

Some Important Developments

I returned to Bath to continue my studies at Bath University: working on the research for this thesis. Consequently I was not as involved in the work, but I was still very much in touch with what was going on.

It was during the summer of 1985 that the organization began to take on a more tangible appearance, other than "John and Pat plus friends". This was through the attainment of legal status as a recognised charitable body, although this had not happened through the route that had been expected. The manner in which this happened was another "interesting experience".

As well as providing the practical strengths of a more professional image, the event provided considerable "experiential meaning" to counteract the feelings of failure over finance. John tells the story of how we had set up a Trust. This was the route through which we had expected we would be given charitable status:

"Our Trust Instrument went to the Charity Commission for outline approval and they raised objection after objection. In the end we believed that God was locking it.. We actually prayed "Lord, we're dropping it: either we're up a gum tree or we're doing something wrong, we'll drop it"."

John continued his story with what happened next:

"I think it was only the following week that somebody came up to me and said, "You don't know anyone who wants charitable status do you?"."

PAT "Well, it was even more miraculous than that actually. We'd been in touch with Pat W., the Housing Manager in Plymouth, over a girl who needed housing. [As a result] we got a phone call from Jeff L. who said "I'd like to meet with you"."

JOHN "He was on the Devon Consultative Group for Accommodation... working in Liaison with the probation service on housing young offenders and that sort of thing... He phoned us up and said, "Look, are you by any chance looking for charitable status?". I said, "Actually we are, but we're not doing very well". He said, "Well, there's this dormant housing society in Plymouth. They've been trying for two years to get a programme off the ground but everything they've tried hasn't worked out. They want to fold, but can't afford to fold because it costs money; so they want to hand over lock-stock-and-barrel to somebody who's going to do similar work to them. They've been trying to set up a house for young offenders". I said, "Well, that's similar to what we're

trying to do". He said, "I know, I heard about you from Pat W."... Seven of us were elected on to their committee a few weeks later. The rest of their committee resigned en masse leaving us as a charity and a registered Housing Society - and I didn't even know what a Housing Society was at the time...

"Getting charitable status improved our begging technique no end! It gave us more credibility with the grant making trusts, as a lot of them won't give money to organizations that don't have charitable status. So, I got down to writing off to a whole load of them."

This gave a new lease of energy to John and Pat and those working with them. The applications to grant making trusts raised several hundred pounds over the following months, but nothing substantial. Another unexpected turn of events proved even more encouraging: the involvement of a Housing Association who provided funds for capital investment in community based projects like John and Pat's.

JOHN "We hadn't realised the potential of the Housing Society bit, because if we had become an ordinary charitable trust we wouldn't have been able to receive funding from the Housing Corporation.

"The Government... pumps money into voluntary organizations through this instrument called the Housing Corporation - it's a Government body. Underneath the Housing Corporation there are Housing Associations. These are semi-government, semi-voluntary bodies. They filter applications to the Housing Corporation and

then, if something is approved, they hold the property for the Housing Corporation.

"What happened to us was that a little while later Andrew T., who... we used to know quite well, said to me, "You're a Housing Society aren't you? The Devon and Cornwall Housing Association have one hundred thousand pounds allocated to them by the Housing Corporation for a project but the project's folded. Why don't you go and apply to them for the money and see if they can get it transferred to your project?". So that was exactly what we did.

"We went to see Richard M. [of the Devon and Cornwall Housing Association] and we explained what we wanted to do. He said, "There's no way it's going to work. You've done it all upside down and back to front. What happens is that you make an application for a project. If they agree to fund it then we look for a house, buy it and get it ready for you to use. The whole application process takes eighteen months and there's no way you're going to shorten that to enable you to buy this house in Durnford Street...". He said, "Forget it!", but we said, "We'd like you to apply please." He said "Okay" and he applied."

Success

Pat continues the story, with the good news that their perseverance was beginning to pay off:

"It was August 1985 that we saw Richard... It was actually the end of October, beginning of November, that we got to know that our application had been accepted... By this time it was coming up for a year since we'd seen the house and we were desperate.

It was very hard standing on what God had said for a year with nothing, virtually. We'd been through peaks and troughs: when we got "Change of Use" we got excited, and when we got turned down by Christian organizations we got depressed...

"The phone went this particular Friday evening. It was Andrew T. and he said "The Devon and Cornwall Housing Association have got the consent to go ahead with your project." Of course we nearly took off. So we said we must get on to her estate agents. We rang the next morning... They said, "Well, it's amazing. Mrs T. was going to take it off the market on Monday morning". She'd got fed up waiting after nearly a year and was going to convert it into three flats..."

Doubts

This, however, was not the end of their need for faith. In some ways it was the greater involvement of others, and consequently John and Pat's dependence on others, that required the practice of even greater faith. Control of events was often out of their hands. Time has moved on and it is now the spring of 1986.

"Contracts got drawn up and they were going to be exchanged and we were going away for a couple of days. We got back - remember this is fifteen months after we first saw the house. John phoned Richard M. "We're back, do you want anything?", and he said, "I've got some bad news for you. Mrs T. won't sign the contract. She won't exchange." That was a Friday wasn't it?"

JOHN "Black Friday."

PAT "Richard M. said, "However, I believe she's going to change her mind so I'm going ahead as though she's exchanged."

In this, Richard M. demonstrated a good example of the everyday practice of faith. However, John and Pat took this news very hard.

JOHN "Our faith had dropped to zero at this point. We were desperately disappointed."

PAT "At that point we could have said, "Get lost God!". In fact I did say, "I've had enough - what are you doing with us?".

JOHN "We were totally fed up with the cat-and-mouse game that God seemed to be playing with us."

PAT "We spent a miserable weekend... We realised on the Friday night that God was actually saying to us "If I take the house away from you now, will you still go my way?" And also, "Do you believe the word I gave you?". Now, in some ways they seem to be opposite but in actual fact it is all teaching (a) about standing on the word of God, and (b) about obedience, that God is ultimately in charge, that he has the right to do anything he wants because he is God. By Monday we'd sort of painfully got to the point where we'd said, "Okay. If you take the house away, we'll start again." We were worn out, emotionally and physically, getting to that point. But we prayed... Within a few days she had signed and we actually believed that it wasn't a coincidence at the time.

This reorganization of their critical meaning was very important for John and Pat because it had been the powerful transcendent meaning that had carried them through the difficulties of the previous two years, and were to carry them through the difficulties that were to come. Their faith was knocked, but they were able to make it even more robust as a result.

Buying the House

It was important that their own faith was intact because things did not run smoothly for them. Pat recalled,

"It was a year, we're talking about the end of January 1986 that they exchanged contracts, and completion took until the middle of May: there was obstacle after obstacle, and of course we just couldn't relax. Even though the contracts had been exchanged, until it was complete, we just had a knot in our stomachs.

"We got completion on May the 15th 1986 - it should have been the 13th and we had waited all day for the phone call to say it was completed.. there was a technical hitch... It took two more days of sweat and prayer before it was finally completed. Then it was just the building work that needed to be done."

At last, two and a half years after they had first committed themselves to the project that they thought would take "six weeks", John and Pat had their house. It was a year before they were able to move in, because the Devon and Cornwall Housing Association wanted to do some building work. However, John and Pat were assured that the house was, for all intents and purposes, allocated for their use. They had achieved their first major goal.

Analysis and Comment

The practice of faith as studied here arises from the complex meaning that is embodied in a complete way of life. The depths of this meaning have only been touched. However, a number of interesting insights may be drawn from the account recorded above. A not insignificant phenomenon is the relationship between understanding and faith.

Faith and Understanding: Taking a Risk

Faith is an attitude and therefore comprises cognitive, behavioural and affective components. Cognition, the process of understanding, is therefore an integral part of the practice of faith contributing to the decision making process.

The crucial distinction to be made between the theory of decision making in faith and most decision theory is that the level of dependence upon understanding is much lower. The development of the practice of faith is not dependent upon a clear understanding of what is being performed. The practice of faith will generally benefit from being informed action but it is not dependent upon a developed body of understanding concerning the particular choice.

John and Pat were not "unreasoning": there was a strong rationale in all of their activity. They were not generally, however, unduly shaken in their faith when their reasoning proved to be in error. For example, they were expecting to move from their home in Saltash straight in to a property suitable for residential work. In fact, they moved in to a smaller property than their own. John then expected that it would be only six weeks before they were moving again. In fact, it was over three years. They originally

expected to obtain funding from Christian sources. In fact, the money came from a Housing Association.

Other aspects of their reasoning proved correct, or at least, useful. For example, the rationale that finding a house first would facilitate the purchase and establishment of the house once funding was obtained. However, it is interesting to note that if they had sought Housing Association backing at the beginning they would have been advised not to do this. Richard M. told them "There's no way it's going to work." Their ignorance of standard procedures helped them and it did work.

This project began with a "sense of purpose" after Pat's healing. This took form in a "calling" to establish a residential home. When they started to take actions, such as selling their home, the detail of what they should do and where they would go was largely uncertain. However, they believed that they should and could do it.

In such circumstances where uncertainty persists, understanding will inevitably be limited. A dominance of understanding in undergirding action in such a situation can lead to scepticism, which will tend to inhibit activity. The practice of faith, on the other hand, attributes importance to the meaning that is held rather than to the understanding that is absent. As a result activity may arise and proceed. This was the model that was outlined in chapter 8, on "Choice".

It should be noted that, although acting whilst uncertain is experienced as risk, the alternatives of "not acting" or of "acting otherwise" will also lead to the experience of risk. The first of these, the option of "not

acting" is the prevalent response of the "sceptic", who may be seen as the individual who places "critical meaning" in extreme dominance to transcendent or experiential meaning. This is the argument of positivist science. However, James (1904) argues that there is a stronger rationale for faith rather than scepticism in situations of uncertainty:

"Scepticism, then, is not avoidance of option; it is option of a particular kind of risk. "Better risk of loss of truth than chance of error" - that is your faith-vetoer's exact position." (p126)

Faith, however, risks making a mistake, recognising that learning processes are generally enhanced by a process of trial and error (Bateson 1972). Iacocca (1985) makes an astute observation reflecting this when commenting upon another President of the Ford Motor Company:

"Too many managers let themselves get weighed down in their decision making, especially those with too much education. I once said to Philip Caldwell, who became the topman at Ford after I left: "The trouble with you, Phil, is that you went to Harvard, where they taught you not to take any action until you've got all the facts. You've got ninety-five percent of them, but it's going to take you another six months to get that last five percent. And by the time you do, your facts will be out of date because the market has moved on you. That's what life is all about - timing." (p50)

Wittgenstein (1979) summarises this point well in his observation that,

"From its seeming to me - or to everyone - to be so, it doesn't follow that it is so.

What we can ask is whether it can make sense to doubt it." (p2)

For John and Pat, this aspect of the practice of their faith involved going ahead with looking for a property, even though there was little indication at the time of where funding would come from. This was a risk, but it did not make sense to doubt it.

Seen in this light, it is not true to say that understanding was not important to them: in hindsight it is clear that the understanding that they had was important at the time, particularly in providing a sense of security. Thus, even where their understanding was in error, it had a positive purpose in calming the unpleasant experience of uncertainty. There were also times when it was important for them to work through their understanding of a situation. For example, the episode when Mrs T., the house owner, refused to exchange contracts. This seems to have been the final straw for John and Pat, and their confidence crumbled. They had to spend a weekend regaining their sense of security, which involved a developed understanding of their relationship with God.

However, their understanding was not the basis of their faith. For example, the time when their negotiations for the Guest House fell through and yet they chose to carry on and sell their house is a good illustration of the difference between acting on understanding and acting on faith, and the unpleasant experience of intellectual uncertainty. Pat believes that this was a crucial decision in their practice of faith, and a quote that was used earlier recalls

"I think if there was one point that revealed what God was going to do with us it was the point that we realised that he wanted us to carry on and sell the house in Saltash but was not going to provide bigger premises there and then."

The security that they had in their understanding disappeared. John described his response to this decision to go ahead and sell their house as

"sheer and utter panic. I had no coherent thoughts..."

Recently Pat and John retold this story:

"We were talking to two of the girls about selling our house in Saltash and John was saying how ill he felt when he actually agreed the sale before we got the phone call [from Hywell Jones] offering us the house in Cleeve Gardens . And she said, "Oh, didn't you trust God?" and John said, "No I didn't." And we were explaining to her about faith and trust sort of growing, and how you're still human, you've still got your natural upbringing behind you, you've still got the world coming in in various ways, and it's not easy. She said, "I'm not criticising you. I'd much rather you be honest. I've heard so many Christians say "I trust God for everything"."

The cognitive element of their decision was that God would provide them with a house for residential work. The decision to sell their house was not dependent on a body of understanding but on the belief that God was with them as they sold their house, and that this was what God wanted them to do. As John found, this was not as easy to do as it is to say. Nevertheless, their actions indicate that, if only to a small degree, they trusted God rather than their understanding. They let go of control of their lives and placed it in God's hands.

Faith and Hearing from God

Their practice of faith was dependent upon hearing God. They were prepared

to commit themselves on the basis of a form of "social influence" that was not the result of a rational or "good argument" (Smithin 1983) but because it came from God. The mechanisms through which they either heard directly from God, or gained confirmation of what they were hearing were diverse: Gordon's prophesy, John and Pat's experiences in the house, the "miraculous" axiomatic experiences of obtaining change-of-use, taking over the housing society and receiving the finance. All of these contributed to the faith that they practised.

The painful episode of doubt as they waited for the house to be purchased illustrates the pool of uncertainty that, at times, surrounded their practice of faith. These periods of doubt were not infrequent from the beginning of their practice of faith. These were unpleasant times, but John and Pat believe they were productive:

PAT "We've learned a lot about faith. And we've learned to recognise a word from God and actually stand on it, no matter what."

JOHN "You see, God promised us the place, and all the evidence pointed in the opposite direction. When you've got an owner who says she's not selling, well..."

PAT "[Our faith is] not just that God will bring about the vision he created, but it goes further than that: that God is in control of everything... Since we saw Durnford Street (and I see that as another crucial turning point in our life) there have been two straight choices: either we stood on what God gave us that very first time we saw it, or, when the going got rough,... we didn't."

The practice of faith involves adopting an attitude of certainty in circumstances that may appear uncertain if looked at from a different perspective. This was not a natural activity for John and Pat: as they say, they have had to learn it. However, the result is a way of life that they find robust and even preferable to alternatives. It is a way of life that is based upon social considerations of relationship and trust rather than the independence of understanding and self-assurance. However, on this base of trust in God, John and Pat have developed an independence and security in situations that many would find intolerable and impossible to cope with.

The Practice of Faith

Pat said that they have "learned to recognise a word from God and actually stand on it, no matter what". This was the nub of their practice of faith. It was the attribution of the quality of "absolute certainty" to a particular statement or proposal, with accompanying action. The actions that they took were based on their faith. Pat refers to "standing on" the word. This imagery is appropriate in that when there was no other action to take they still had to believe that their faith would come about, they had to "stand" still.

When they opened the house in 1987 they asked Clive, of the Evangelical Alliance, to come to speak at a "Dedication Service" for the house. When they had approached him concerning raising finance for the house Clive had told them "you don't stand a chance without a miracle". Pat recalls that Clive had something to say concerning faith

"Clive C. had twenty seven letters asking for help with projects in the year that we wrote to him (1985). When he came to dedicate the house in March (1987) he said that we were only the

third project to get off the ground. He gets hundreds of letter to the Evangelical Alliance saying "This is what God is telling us to do." Clive said to us, "Okay, they might have good intentions, but it's the way God sorts out the men from the boys. You know, "Have you got 'stickability'?"".

"Stickability" is the "unchangeability" that results from commitment. Of all characteristics that mark out the practice of faith as different from other forms of action, it is this that is at the heart. It was this that provided the power for John and Pat to achieve their goal where others failed.

Summary

The Power of Faith

Faith is "power to" achieve a variety of personally and socially valued goals. Faith draws together available capacities in a focused direction and persists until those goals are reached. Faith is not dissuaded by adverse circumstances, even personal failure. Faith accepts that most worthwhile activities "look like a failure in the middle".

John and Pat started off with a failure: failing to raise finance to purchase the Guest House. They started off expecting to buy a property within six weeks; within seven weeks they found out that they were wrong. However, their faith was robust, unchangeable.

One operational goal of their practice of faith was the purchase of a suitable property, and so they focused on this goal and pursued it. Financially things did not look very healthy, but that was not, ultimately, sufficient reason to doubt.

The direction obtained further focus with the transcendent and experiential meaning accompanying the visit to 78 Durnford Street in the December of 1984. John and Pat had found the house. The operational objective was now to raise the finance to purchase and establish it as a residential property.

Faith presses on regardless of a lack of encouraging achievements. No money was provided for John and Pat to buy the house. Throughout 1985 they pursued prospective backers with no result. They sought advice and were told to hope for a miracle! In the autumn a new opportunity arose and they pursued that as well. The Devon and Cornwall Housing Association advised them that "the whole application process takes eighteen months and there's no way you're going to shorten that to enable you to buy this house in Durnford Street". The man said, "Forget it!", but John and Pat said, "We'd like to apply, please". In the November they heard that the money had been allocated to them.

Despite the pain, faith presses on through further disappointments. John and Pat at one point thought that the house would not be sold to them. They all but gave up. However, "by the skin of their teeth" they held to their faith and pressed on, and the house was purchased.

All three forms of meaning can contribute to the practice of faith. For John and Pat critical meaning was often very weak, but transcendent and experiential meaning maintained a robust, integral faith. There was uncertainty and the experience of risk in their actions, but bound to their practice of faith there was more to lose and nothing to gain in giving up.

John and Pat were dependent upon God in their practice of faith: they did

not know how they would reach their goals other than through God's help. Transcendent meaning was consequently central in guiding their action. The persistence and development of their relationship with God was thus a key to the persistence and development of their faith.

Such faith was "blind" in the sense that it led to primitive, undifferentiated beliefs to which they attributed the quality of "absolute certainty" in situations of great uncertainty and high risk. To the critical mind this might seem untenable, but it worked. John and Pat were able to persist despite some severe knocks. John and Pat's faith was not a product of their deliberations but an affair of the heart.

CHAPTER 11

THE PRACTICE OF FAITH IN CONTEXT

Throughout this study of the practice of faith, the analysis has concentrated upon the elements of John and Pat's actions that contributed to the task of answering the question "What is faith?". However, this is far from the whole story of what happened in Plymouth. I remember Pat once saying that, if their story was ever written, she hoped that it would be more "real" than most of the Christian biographies that she had come across. The point that she was making was that their experience had not been "all sweetness and light", it had not been a wonderful, exciting extravaganza right from the start. In fact, over all, the experience was an extremely hard and painful one, with moments of brightness at particular points. Pat described the effect that this has had on them as a family when one day she remarked, "You know, we hardly ever laugh any more". Recalling the story told in the foreword, when I first went to Sunday lunch with them, this change was quite noticeable: they had been a very fun-loving family, but the years of setting up "The Spring" had worn away that care-free attitude.

To set this study in context, and to meet Pat's desire for a "real" account of their story, at least in part, it is necessary to go beyond the question "What is faith?" to finish the story. The most prominent aspect of this context is that faith is not practised in isolation, but must involve many other individuals. This requires skills that go beyond the process of believing, and at times may run counter to it, necessitating submitting the

goals of faith to the needs of those around. Given the importance that is attributed to these goals, the difficulty of this task is evident. However, having recognised that faith is "power", the conflict of interests that can arise and the experience of this conflict is a source of problems that can only be ignored at your peril.

A satisfactory account of this part of the story would require a further thesis. The analysis provided here does little more than bring notice to some of the more pertinent aspects for consideration.

The moral of this chapter is that "if faith is important then interpersonal relations moreso".

Successful Innovators

The practice of faith is the self-actualizing, creative process that can bring about new situations and desired goals. Faith can bring about innovation. In her study of successful innovators, referring to such individuals and companies as "change masters", Kanter (1983) argues

"Though innovators are diverse people in diverse circumstances, they share an integrative mode of operating which produces innovation: seeing problems not within limited categories but in terms larger than received wisdom; they make new connections, both intellectual and organizational; and they work across boundaries, reaching beyond the limits of their own job as given. They are not rugged individualists - as in the classic stereotype of the entrepreneur - but good builders and users of teams, as even classic business creators have to be. And so they are aided in their quest for innovation by an integrative

environment, in which ideas flow freely, resources are attainable rather than locked in budgetary boxes, and support and teamwork across areas are the norm." (p212)

This quote summarises quite beautifully what we might call "the power" and "the problem" for John and Pat. As the last chapter described, their faith was "power" to do a number of things. John and Pat were visionaries in their plans to establish the residential home, and their vision extended well beyond plans for a single home. They could see the problems of finance, but were not limited by this, and had a "different" or "larger" wisdom. Their activities shocked and surprised some, and it excited many because of the originality and daring of their approach. They reached beyond the norm and made "connections" that brought some of the results that they sought.

However, against all of this, colouring their success and tainting their own excitement and enjoyment of their achievements was the pain; and largely the pain that came from failing relationships and ineffective collaboration.

Time after time the teams that John and Pat tried to build suffered from inner conflict and disunity. For example, Lynn, who moved from Bristol to work with them from April 1984, left in the August of that year after a number of heated arguments with John. It was difficult for me to determine at the time quite why this happened as I felt happy with both parties. However, Lynn left claiming that she could not agree with the way that John and Pat were running the work. Later, Lorraine came to work with them and after a period of time she too left, unable to agree with John and Pat. A similar pattern can be observed in a number of relationships that showed promise in the early stages of development, but eventually dissolved when

the other parties withdrew from involvement in the work. Some of these experiences proved extremely painful for John and Pat, perhaps most notably the departure of Karen, a friend that John had made whilst studying at Bible College early in 1985.

Karen had moved to Plymouth to work with John and Pat shortly after she had finished at the college and worked full-time on the project very closely with John and Pat. However, when she left she made some very public critical remarks to a number of people in Plymouth. The result, on top of the personal anguish and disappointment, was that John and Pat's relationship with some of the church leaders in Plymouth was soured.

The seriousness of this was evident at the time, as John and Pat found these conflicts difficult to cope with. However, similar events later in the project were even more serious. The pattern of dissolving relationships continued, and during 1987 and 1988, when the organization of The Spring was well developed, with four trustees and between six and eight committee members administering the operations, some interpersonal conflicts and disagreements arose that led, eventually if not directly, to John and Pat finally withdrawing from involvement in the work.

As Kanter suggests, successful entrepreneurs cannot work on their own: they must work with others in order to bring about their vision. John and Pat drew many to them and in part succeeded in fulfilling their vision. However, the final months of their time living in Plymouth were painful and extremely difficult for them. They found themselves feeling angry, frustrated and even betrayed by those with whom they had worked.

Eventually John and Pat moved to London at the end of 1988, leaving behind the organization that they had fought to establish with the house under the wardenship of people whose way of working they fundamentally disapproved. The power was now out of their hands as they had resigned with great sadness from their positions as chairman and secretary of the committee of Allied Housing (Plymouth) Ltd, the controlling body. At the time of leaving for London Pat reflected on their time in Plymouth and said to me,

"I feel as though the last six years of our lives have been a complete and utter waste."

Even if this thesis demonstrates that their time was not wasted, this was what it felt like to John and Pat, a sentiment that is all the more sobering when one considers the importance of the work to them both. They had bothered because they cared, and now it all seemed to have failed.

Running the House

By the end of the last chapter the story had been told up to the point where the Devon and Cornwall Housing Association had purchased the house in Durnford Street for John and Pat's work. This was early in 1986. It was noted that John and Pat were unable to move into the house until the June of 1987 because of building work that the Housing Association wished to complete. This was not absolutely necessary for the use of the house, but there was a policy that all their properties should be expected to require no major maintenance work for at least ten years which required rectifying anything that might possibly need attention.

John and Pat finally moved into the house in the June of 1987 and for the first time since John had given up his job, in 1984, they received a salary

for their work. This was the decision of the Spring Trust, by now under the chairmanship of John Smyth, the pastor of a local church. The other trustees were Stuart Jones, Richard Bunt, and myself, who had all been involved with John and Pat's work in one way or another since the beginning in 1984.

A series of problems inhibited the use of the property, such as inadequate fire prevention facilities which were supposed to have been completed with the building work. The financial viability of the house was a little precarious in this start up phase, and the slow intake of residents served to exacerbate the potential difficulties; overheads still had to be met.

Further problems developed in that, by late autumn it was evident that John and Pat were exhausted. The pressures of running the home, of the demanding nature of their counselling work with some very disturbed young women, and of coping with the increasing financial worries of the organization were beginning to take their toll. All this had come on top of their struggles in obtaining the house in the first place.

The Spring Trust, with responsibility for John and Pat's activities, and the Allied Housing (Plymouth) Committee who had responsibility for running the house, determined with John and Pat that they would not be able to cope for much longer with the pressure of living and working in the house. The Trust took on the job of finding a new warden to replace John and Pat.

However, this proved to introduce some more difficulties into the situation. Some disagreements began to surface in the way that the house should be run, and in particular the type of person that should be employed as warden. After a number of discussions, we, the trustees, asserted that it was

important that the responsibility for the decision was left with us. We found a couple, members of John Smyth's church, who seemed ideal for the task.

Growing Disagreement

Although the relationship between John and Pat and "the trustees" had not been particularly good for some while, where John and Pat had been voicing feelings that they were not receiving enough practical support, the appointment of Ruth and Ian as wardens was to form the leading point of a wedge that was to bring increasing division.

Over this period of time it is not unreasonable to talk of "the trustees" as a single body because of the general unity of mind and purpose that was evidenced. Although individually we were relating to John and Pat more or less well, as a group in our roles as trustees there was a distinct difference of opinion with John and Pat.

This can be seen in terms of the different meanings that the work had for each one of us. None of us had had the variety of "words from God" or "axiomatic experiences" that John and Pat had experienced. As a result, our involvement was largely due to our friendship with John and Pat (transcendent meaning) and our interest in the work that they were doing (critical meaning). Intricately involved was also the influence of our personal Christian faith, relationship with and understanding of God. In short we were all practising our own faith in our involvement with the work.

The work, its aims, our aims, and the confidence that we had in effective ways of developing the work were consequently quite different from John and

Pat's. In the main, up to this point (some three years for most of us), we had tended to follow John and Pat's lead in decisions that were made concerning the work. After all, they were the people who had committed everything that they had to the work. However, as the financial situation deteriorated and there were evident problems in the work because of John and Pat's exhaustion, we recognised our responsibility to take more control of what was happening.

Following John and Pat, we had become more committed: we too would suffer if the work folded, both in terms of frustrated desires to succeed, the humiliation and embarrassment of failure, and in terms of financial commitment (the trustees were legally responsible for the debt of the Spring Trust, several thousand pounds at this time. Allied Housing was a limited company and so the same was not the case, provided negligence could not be proven).

Our faith in being involved with the work had been founded on the meaning received from and so shared with John and Pat. However, as time progressed, each of us had developed further critical, transcendent and experiential meaning concerning the project.

Individual Conflicts

The foundation of our involvement, our faith in John and Pat, took some knocks. I will speak only for myself here, rather than the other trustees, as this will prove sufficient example. However, I am aware that similar events were of importance for them.

Since leaving John and Pat in the May of 1985 to return to Bath, I had

committed myself to a church in Bath whose members practised a similar faith to my own. Although I had a number of difficulties working through minor disagreements, I became more involved with the activities of this church. As a result, a number of the things that I came to believe were different to what John and Pat believed.

The detail of this is not important here, except to say that my faith was very important to me, just as John and Pat's faith was important to them. For John and Pat to disagree would have been fine provided sufficient diplomacy was used. However, I often experienced this as not being the case, and John and Pat often expressed open disagreement.

The dissonance that was caused by their criticism meant that I was forced either to "rubbish" my own beliefs or to "rubbish", at least in part, John and Pat's credibility. Almost inevitably, having attacked some of the most important areas of my life, John and Pat's credibility suffered. Following the argument suggested in chapter three for the status of "referent others", this inevitably damaged the "attractiveness" of John and Pat for me, at least to an extent.

The foundation of my faith in the work in Plymouth was severely challenged, as the primary source of meaning was transcendent, received from John and Pat. This was a painful experience for me and, I know, for John and Pat. At this point I attempted to withdraw from my involvement with the work, after discussing it with John and Pat, but was persuaded to continue for a little while by John Smyth on the basis that it might harm the work rather than help it.

A Modified Direction

As a body of trustees we listened to John and Pat and took their ideas seriously, but we ceased to be directed solely by their understanding of the vision. We chose the route that seemed most appropriate to all of us. With good intent the trustees pressed and guided the work in ways that ran counter to some of John and Pat's strongly expressed wishes and opinions.

To John Smyth's credit as a successful "corporate entrepreneur" himself, he succeeded in carrying John and Pat with us. Although John and Pat fought and objected at times John Smyth responded by modifying direction sufficiently to accommodate John and Pat. He said on a number of occasions that he would "resign as chairman of the trustees rather than do anything that would damage [his] friendship with John and Pat".

The factor driving the need for modifications was the steadily worsening financial position: the Spring Trust and Allied Housing were several thousand pounds overdrawn. On top of this Ruth and Ian were having difficulties in the house. In both cases things did not look like improving. The trustees believed that these were distinct problems that both needed careful handling. John and Pat believed that the latter was in large part the cause of the former, and wished to replace Ruth and Ian.

At this time my confidence to carry on came from the fact that John Smyth was involved. I think that this was true, to an extent in the other trustees and in John and Pat. Trusting his financial and business acumen, we believed him when he said, at a number of seemingly critical stages, that there was no cause for alarm, "provided the situation improves". And John Smyth seemed to have a vision for how it could improve. In summary, the picture could be

described as:

E --> P John's confidence, vicariously adopted by others
P --> O John's ideas for a way through
V the success/survival of the organization

John Smyth provided us with the confidence, and therefore the motivation, to push on through. He took over as our "corporate entrepreneur", taking on a task identified by Kanter (1983) as important in "keeping the action phase active":

"A... task of corporate entrepreneurs in the action phase is to engage in whatever "secondary redesign" of systems, structures, or methods is necessary to keep the project going." (p234)

Without John Smyth at this point I can see no way (barring miracles, which was probably at the root of John and Pat's vision) that the organization could have pulled through. No one else seemed to have any confidence whatsoever, apart from John and Pat who persisted in arguing for their way of doing things. Their faith was still strong. However, John Smyth drew us together as a team, negotiated a path through the difficulties which we were prepared to own and to which we would commit ourselves. As a result, as a team, we were able to handle John and Pat's disagreements and continue to guide the organization as we desired.

John and Pat had forfeited some of their credibility with us as individuals through their criticism of some of our deeply held values and so they lost our "ear". Further, John and Pat omitted to pay sufficient attention to the activity of negotiation. Kanter (1983) suggests that after getting information and support from others in the early stages of project

definition,

"A second kind of early information need is "political": information about the existing stakes in the issue and needs of other areas that could be tied to the project to help sell it and support it. Even the most hard-nosed, technically focused engineers I saw acknowledged the need for as much political as technical information in early stages of an entrepreneurial project." (p219)

There was insufficient attempt on their part to determine the needs of those around them and to negotiate a way forward. I suspect that it felt to many that John and Pat expected them to "work for them" rather than "alongside them". This is not a problem if the interests of the individual are met by other means (salary being the common organizational bargain, but working with "attractive" others is another), but John and Pat did not enter into any "bargaining" at many of the crucial points of conflict. Kanter suggests that

"The first action-phase task is to handle criticism or opposition that may jeopardise the project." (p230)

This ability to handle criticism seems to be at the root of a lot of the pain that John and Pat experienced. Kanter argues that the successful innovator will pay attention to criticism that comes from important parties, and respond to that criticism. Most importantly, however, this will be a modus operandi for the effective entrepreneur, who will tend to minimise the amount of criticism that arises by expecting its likelihood, recognising the right of others to see things differently, and negotiating a joint solution to the problem. As a result, Kanter observes,

"It is striking how little overt opposition is encountered by entrepreneurial managers - perhaps because their success at coalition building determines whether a project starts at all..." (p236)

Kanter goes on to comment on her study of "change masters" that,

"In total I saw remarkably little backbiting and undermining surrounding the innovative accomplishments, and by and large rationality seems to prevail - once the initial political homework has been done." (p232)

John and Pat were excellent at involving people and inspiring others with their vision. However, difficulties surfaced whenever challenges were made to the direction that they wished to take. Kanter later suggests that

"... the corporate entrepreneur has to understand the uses of participation in order to realise individual visions." (p238)

Participation must involve allowing others freedom in their areas of responsibility. John and Pat found that it was necessary to have others participating: they could not do it all on their own, and particularly suffered when others failed to relieve them of responsibility for the financial side of the work. However, to allow others to participate is to release control, and John and Pat found it difficult when this implied the modification of their vision.

Kanter suggests that successful innovators demonstrate a number of qualities that unsuccessful innovators do not:

"What corporate entrepreneurs do show, compared with their

counterparts, is a longer time horizon, conviction in an idea, no need for immediate results or measure, and a willingness to convey a vision of something that might come out a little different when finished." (p129)

Having pursued their goal over four years, having remarkable conviction, and the ability to withstand the frustrations of limited results, John and Pat were looking like good entrepreneurs. However, they were not prepared to allow their vision to be modified by others: they would not negotiate. It was this last factor that seems to have brought the most extreme pressure upon John and Pat.

This characteristic of "unchangeability" is one of the primary characteristics of powerful faith, and is not a problem if others can be involved by the interest that they have in the original vision. However, when the overdraft was large and getting larger, and the situation in the house bad and getting worse, we trustees had "needs for achievement" (Herzberg 1968, McLelland 1961) of our own. John and Pat did not convince us that their way would meet our needs, and so the "negotiation that never was" became a "power battle".

Leaving Plymouth

Eventually the conflict of interests became too great and "losing the battle", as it seemed to them, John and Pat stepped down. They resigned from the committee.

At this time John and Pat had been approached by a group of Christian practising GPs in London to take over the role of counsellors in their

clinic. After much agonizing John and Pat decided that it was the way ahead for them.

With some hope, but largely sadness, John and Pat settled things in Plymouth and arranged to move up to London. John Smyth was able to help by providing a flat for them to rent in Clapham; one of the properties that make up a part of the investments of a Pension Fund that he manages.

And so, some eight years after moving to Plymouth from Southampton, John and Pat were on the move again; but this time the future did not seem to them so bright, their vision tarnished and dull. What had started in so much excitement and daring, and progressed through miraculous stories of financial provision and healing for so many people, had, it seemed, ended in a lot of pain and terrible sadness for John and Pat. The house continued to run, but not as they had hoped that it would.

POST SCRIPT

I recently spoke to Pat on the telephone. They were feeling better in themselves, although far from perfect. However, one thing that Pat said made me wonder if this really is the end of their involvement with "The Spring" in Plymouth. I will leave Pat with the last words:

"You know, Pete, I was talking to John Smyth a couple of weeks back and, as he was talking about the house, I thought, "He's beginning to understand the vision; he's beginning to understand what God really intended the house to be for". I think he's realised over the past few months what we were trying to say. He's got a new warden in who seems really good - a lady who's just been through Elim Bible College. John said to me that he wants us to be

involved with the way the house is run. As you can imagine, it wasn't easy, but I gave the new warden at Durnford Street a ring earlier today. She seems to be very good. She has offered for John and I to stay there when we're down in Plymouth. I haven't got over it all that much though. I couldn't stay there in the house, not yet..."

PART FIVE

AN END TO THE RESEARCH

CHAPTER 12

CONCLUSIONS

There is a need to bring some sense of closure in any activity like the research that has lead to the argument of this thesis. This need for closure exists to satisfy the desire for achievement: fulfilment comes with the experience of completion, of finishing. I have found the process of writing important in this because it forces a structure to be placed upon a wilderness of diverse and ambiguous experience; lines of deliberation that have remained open must be forced or, at least encouraged, to close. For this reason, the whole of this thesis, and not just this chapter, communicates conclusion.

As well as the compulsion of examination requirements, I have had a personal need to bring this project to conclusion. From an existentialist standpoint I accept that this argument is ultimately unsupportable, possibly trivial, but I choose not to rob myself of the pleasure of consummation. Conclusion is the process of choice which allows action to arise from a particular meaning. This underlies the pragmatics of positivism, facilitating the expression of "man as a form of motion", rather than the paralysis that can arise from confusion.

As well as my own personal desires, I recognise a social need, in that others too desire this fulfilment. To experience ambiguity can be an exhilarating experience, but it can also be extremely uncomfortable, even offensive. It

is to meet a natural and suitable requirement of others that this thesis offers some sense of closure.

There are, however, problems in closure. The first is that it involves the imposition of a limited construction upon necessarily complex events. This serves to trivialise often important events in a way that can also bring offense, albeit in a different way, if one disagrees with the construction. This is a particular concern of mine with respect to John and Pat's reaction to, particularly, Chapter 11. I hope that I have been successful in handling potential offence by the manner in which I have framed my constructions.

A second problem is that the task is an impossible one, for the process of conclusion is to "make objective" the subjective experience. This is problematic in a philosophical sense, as noted above, in that it is essentially unsupportable from an existentialist perspective. However, this is also problematic in a practical sense, and it is on this that I wish to concentrate.

Practically, writing this thesis has been difficult. Over recent months many of these difficulties have disappeared because of "break throughs" in terms of finding suitable constructions that form a cohesive argument. This is indeed the aim of a traditional piece of research, and in a sense I feel the satisfaction of reaching a point of closure that is not uncomfortable. However, ultimately this closure is impossible to complete. As Boothroyd (1978) was quoted in the introduction,

"You will terminate your enquiries consciously or unconsciously at some logically incomplete point. You cannot get to a point of logical finality for yourself nor can you truthfully offer it to

anyone else." (p84)

Dwelling upon this is uncomfortable, because, however much I convince myself that "I have done enough", there is always the feeling and knowledge that "it is impossible to do enough". Interestingly we arrive back at the beginning, locating the necessity for the practice of faith, that scientific endeavour is, as Popper describes, a spiralling process of conjecture and refutation and never one of final verification.

The underlying argument of this thesis has been that this essential feature of the human condition requires a concentration upon subjective meaning, and it is in this sense that I must evaluate this thesis, and it is in this sense that I have requested that the thesis be assessed. Of fundamental importance is the level to which I can be satisfied with "the conclusions" that I have drawn, maintaining my own integrity, with an underlying recognition of my own limitations and fallibility helping me to cope with allowing others to disagree.

Self Assessment

In this light it is helpful to set this chapter on conclusion in the context of how satisfied I feel with this thesis. This will follow the schema for assessment that I set for myself in the Foreword. This self assessment will be used to identify aspects that have been done well and aspects that are less satisfying. Moreover, this will facilitate leading on to considerations for future research.

1. Making Connections

The basis of creativity is that of "making connections" where there were

previously none. The research that has been performed has been focused upon answering the question "What is faith?". This was a puzzle to me as I worked with John and Pat: I wanted to know what it was that allowed them to act the way that they did. They said it was "faith" and in hindsight I believe they were right.

My problem at the time was that no-one could give me a satisfactory explanation of the nature of faith. As time went on I developed the ability to have "faith", and even to recognise "faith" when I saw it in others. Sometimes I could also identify what was "not faith" when people claimed that it was. Very often this was "wishful thinking" or "hope". But still I was not satisfied with my understanding of faith: there was no sense in which I felt able to "close the book" on this quest.

However, finally I have come to the point at which I can answer with some conviction the question "What is faith?". I believe that I understand in a manner that I hope communicates itself in the "confidence" of the argument that is this thesis.

Throughout the research process I have been making connections. I have been fortunate to have had sufficient time to make the connection with my espoused aim of understanding the nature of faith. This lends weight to my claim that I have engaged in some original, creative theory building, because I began with a puzzle and have ended with a solution rather than merely a different form of puzzle.

2. Personal Development

The second criterion of "personal development rather than objective results

as a test of validity" is probably the fundamental element of my research methodology. It has been this test that has allowed me to assess the progression of my thought and practice, with particular reference to my ability to practice faith. Talking with a close friend recently, he commented on this,

"You have an inspiration in the whole of your life now that I never saw in you at university".

In a similar vein, Colin said to me a year ago,

"In the final year of your degree you were a "puzzler", but now you are an academic".

The underlying change has been one from confusion to confidence, from depression to optimism, from the feeling of powerlessness to the conviction of importance in my own contribution to social situations. I can recognise a progressive change in myself from a position of "not knowing" to an experience of "knowing". A further development is evident in that I have changed from a wavering confidence in others, seeing some as at one time "knowing" and at other times "not knowing", to a gradual appreciation of others as "knowing". This has important implications for the social practice of faith. Woodcock and Francis (1988) describe the likely ramifications of these alternative "life positions" for individual behaviour:

Life Position

I'm OK - You're OK

Effects on Individual Behaviour

Shows strong confidence
Is outgoing
Has effective relations with others
Builds trust
Is relaxed
Responds to situations

I'm OK - You're not OK

Shows overblown confidence
Is hard to relate to
Appears arrogant
Inhibits others
Exaggerates own contributions

I'm not OK - You're OK

Shows low confidence
Tends to withdraw
Lacks conviction
Fails to take initiative
Devalues own contributions
Tends to be stressed

I'm not OK - You're not OK

Lacks energy
Tends to be depressed
Fails to be assertive
Is oriented towards failure
Lacks creativity
Generates negative relationships (p48)

A confidence in my own beliefs, with a recognition of my own construal of the world as limited by experience, allows me to be more open to the beliefs and ideas of others. This is a function of the robustness (Rosenhead 1978) of my developing construct system that makes the alternative views of others less of a threat and more of an opportunity for developing my knowledge and experience. This is at the core of assertive, rather than submissive or aggressive, behaviour, through which I am free to assert my own beliefs and needs, even in disagreement or conflict with others. Others are "knowing" in their experience of the world, a factor that merits respect unless the integrity of the other is brought into question.

I am describing the progression of a process that is far from complete, but the awareness and experience of the issues is evidence of personal development. One of the tangible benefits of the surety of faith is a personal security that may benefit others.

3. Appreciation of the Data

Thirdly, appreciation of the data. There is an inevitable weakness in this area because of the depth at which I have attempted to understand the actions and beliefs of John and Pat. I am sure that my construal of their intentions has been inadequate at times, which has led to some problems in our relationship. However, as a research situation these hindrances have been minor in comparison to the level of trust that has existed between us for the larger part of the project, enabling me to gain insights and to persist in my commitment to John and Pat through some of the more crucial and testing situations and events.

My appreciation of John and Pat, and of the integrity of their work, has enabled me to choose to stick with them when it was painful for me, and when others were unable to continue their support. This "stickability" is a crucial aspect of the practice of faith that is research practice.

As an example of the practice of faith my research activity has involved a high element of risk which is an important consideration in the assessment of this thesis. There have been times over the last five years when I have wondered whether I would ever succeed in pulling together the strongly opposing experiences of John and Pat's activities, more common approaches to organizational development, and my own beliefs.

The uncertainty of pursuing what appeared an unusual programme of research was taxing, and yet I had no interest in anything else. However, the diverseness of the data and its unusual nature led to periods of little development, even retrogression, as I attempted to grapple with what was a baffling problem. These issues called upon all of my effort and attention.

As a result I perceive major weaknesses in this thesis, most particularly in terms of depth of understanding and cross-relationship with current theories and models. This applies both to the literature on decision support and on research practice. As I look back now, having come through the most difficult and risk-laden periods of the research, I can see ways in which I could have helped myself, perhaps adopting a more pragmatic approach, drawing more upon the wisdom of others. However, such reflections are meaningless because a primary research achievement has been the learning of these skills that I can now identify and practice. Given the risk that I took in defining the project as I did, I was unable, overall, to have acted in any other way.

4. Degree of Risk

It is for this reason that degree of risk is an important consideration, for it explains areas of weakness. The very nature of research as "risk" is supported by a considerable body of literature on the generation of theory from data (Glaser and Strauss 1968, Reason and Rowan 1981) rather than the routine application of theoretical frameworks to selected data. Thus, although there are identifiable weaknesses that, given greater research skill, could have been surmounted, the fundamental approach is justifiably sound.

The degree of risk made guiding the research process difficult, and, as recorded in chapter 2, I spent a lot of time developing the skills of coping with ambiguity. It was as I developed these skills that I began to succeed in "getting underneath the data".

The "risk" was that I determined to allow the data to speak for itself, and

not to take ready-made explanatory packages into the research situation to provide me with a secure understanding. The problem was that, in looking at John and Pat's activities, none of the models or theories that I was aware of in Bath provided much explanatory power with respect to their activities that they called "living by faith".

Consequently, I needed either to forget the "faith-thing", and concentrate on, for example, "the importance of quantitative data in the decision making process", or to take the risk of hoping that I would find a way of understanding. I use the example of quantitative analysis because this was my original research intention, drawing upon my own skills in that area. I had access to a number of quantitative model, alongside some interesting research questions concerning the relationship between qualitative and quantitative data in the decision making process. Looking at faith was a risk because I had largely to forget about my academic skills and learn from what was going on around me. I had to develop the necessary skills while I was going along.

This learning process was an important product of the research. In terms of personal development, the difficulty that I had in the early stages of the research in relating to the data from an academic standpoint is evidence in how far this process has been a valuable learning experience. The process of "getting underneath the data" is one of allowing experiential and transcendent meaning to have validity alongside potentially conflicting critical meaning. This process, stemming from a robustness in the core of my research faith, allowed the gradual re-organization of means-end networks as the ambiguity sought resolution. However, my character had to come to the place of being able to make the "leap" into uncertainty and dialectical

tension without having to resort to avoidance tactics as the only means of coping with high levels of dissonance. The occurrence of this development is evidence of effective learning.

5. Theory Generated from Data

The process of generating theory from my experiences in Plymouth rather than applying borrowed theories has been an important aspect of the research. Although I have used a variety of theories from the literature, this use has tended to follow "problems" that have arisen from the data, rather than the reverse process of using the data to settle theoretical problems. This distinction is important because it influences the assessment of this thesis, which is essentially a report of "creative theory development" rather than "critical analysis".

Critical analysis requires a coherent body of theory which is applied to the data. The result of good analysis is a tight, coherent argument that provides insight and, hopefully, some useful recommendations for practice.

This has been a secondary element of this research, which has concentrated upon generating a coherent theory. The result of this is a thesis which is less tightly argued, philosophical, and at times pedantic. It is less easy to read and at times lacks an obvious purpose. Often I have found myself asking the question, "So what?".

There are two approaches to answering this question. The first is to begin to "make recommendations", to say that this research is important because "it suggests new ways of practising decision support", for example. The problem with this approach is that it places an emphasis upon critical

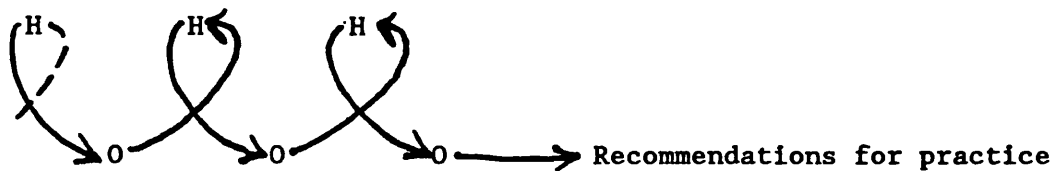
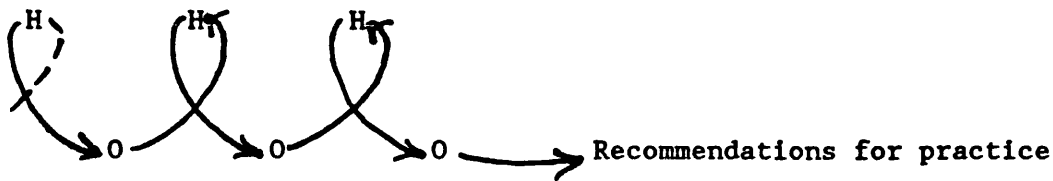
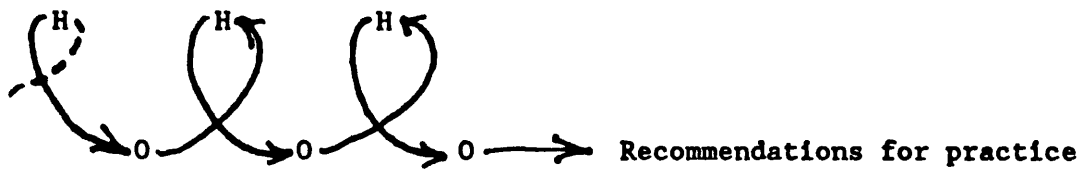
analysis. I have not had the time nor the position, theoretically and with respect to a research site, to do a good job of this. The result has been attempts that are necessarily superficial.

The research that I have done fits best with the second approach to answering the question, "So what?". That is, to say that to develop an answer to the question "What is faith?" will provide a body of theory that may be used in research that can take the first approach, of critical analysis.

In terms of Popper's (1974) theory of scientific development, there is a different emphasis, a different starting point and outcome. The research of this project has started with an emphasis upon the data ("Observations", O) and the outcome has been a developed theory ("Hypothesis", H). Popper argues that the development of knowledge is a spiralling process of conjecture and refutation, which would look like this:



Critical analysis, however, is more practically oriented, with possibly shorter spirals of conjecture and refutation, but more of them, each beginning with a more coherent and developed hypothesis and leading to practical conclusions:



This thesis needs to be assessed as of the former rather than the latter type of research.

6. Strength of Argument

Although critical analysis has not been the primary focus of this research, the strength of the argument is an important factor in the assessment of this as a research project. Critical analysis is a necessary aspect of theory development, just as theoretical development is an important aspect of critical analysis; the difference is one of emphasis.

Taking into account the degree of difficulty in the creative theory building attempt, and bearing in mind the wider issue of my development as an

individual, the need to develop a coherent, critical argument has been a strong driving force.

The difficulty with argument is that it can only be as strong as the elements of the argument that come before. Consequently, time after time I have built an argument only to find the foundations unstable. The argument has then had to be started again from a foundational level, building up to discover, once more, that there were weaknesses in the original assumptions.

Each successive argument has been more stable than the one before, building on the lessons of previous mistakes. However, this "essential feature of the human condition" is logical incompleteness (Boothroyd 1978), and so each argument will inevitably have its flaws. This is my feeling concerning the argument that is this thesis.

How can one hope to capture the complexity of human action in a usable model? Either the model will be "accurate and general but not simple", "simple and general but not accurate" or "accurate and simple but not general" (Weick 1979a). These types may be likened to Pettigrew's (1985) classifications of research and presentation style of "scientific", "descriptive" and "evaluative" respectively, where,

"the descriptive approach is the most informative, the scientific the most precise and predictable, and the evaluative the most interesting to read." (p8)

I have attempted to use a mixture of the scientific and descriptive approaches, presenting a general model of the practice of faith and simplicity and accuracy have fought it out along the way.

The model of "the three forms of meaning" has proven useful in analyzing and providing a reasonable rationale for John and Pat's practice of faith. However, it seems, even now, to be a crude, unwieldy tool that suggests a rigidity and compartmentalization in meaning that is not the experience of the practising believer. In this the argument suffers and I know that now, given the opportunity, I would approach the task of "writing up" in an entirely different way. However, I have had to come this far to be able to throw away the argument and start again. I also know that this process would be never ending.

At heart, however, the argument of this thesis is robust: it captures a lot of what I want to say about the practice of faith, even if it fails to capture even more. I am left questioning my understanding of choice, of the relationship between the three forms of meaning, and various aspects of the thesis; but I also feel a confidence in the argument that tells me that I am a long way further on than when I started.

Further Research

All of this leads on to a consideration of further research. Just as the research for this thesis has arisen from an overwhelming desire to understand the nature of faith; my future research will arise out of desire rather than compulsion. Now is not the time for me to state categorically what those research directions will be, for I do not know what they will be. The dominant desire that I have at the moment is to complete the closure of this period of research. However, in that desire for closure are the seeds of desire for opening up fresh research directions, and my guess is that they will follow some of the paths outlined below.

The strongest thread is to answer the "So what?" question to this research thesis in the way that has not been possible in this project. To begin to discover the practical implications of these ideas and to discover if these ideas are as powerful for practice as I think they are.

The approach will be entirely different: rather than reflective, the primary research approach will need to be outward looking, investigative. An ability to communicate the ideas in understandable and practical ways will be a basic prerequisite. In this thesis, communicability has been something fought for but often sacrificed to the desire for exactitude and philosophical depth. The emphasis will be upon the practice rather than the potential, upon response rather than reason.

In terms of specific research directions, this might involve a focus upon the practice of leadership, following the work of Kanter (1983) and, to a lesser extent, Peters and Waterman (1982) and Inkson et al (1987). Alternatively, or even concurrently, some action research merging the ideas of this thesis with some of the current approaches to decision support (Eden 1988, Bennett 1985, Friend 1983 and Hickling 1985a, 1985b, Checkland 1984, Phillips 1982). In particular I would like to integrate some of the ideas on transcendent meaning, considering the implications for decision support of a "relationship based decision" rather than "intellectual decision".

However, whatever the particular directions, I would like the research that I practice to continue in similar form to that which I have experienced over the last five years. Although it has been painful at times, it has been immensely rewarding. I have valued the experience of being free to follow my own inclinations, interests and needs. On the cover of Reason and Rowan

(1981) there is an apt piece of "graffiti" that goes some way to explaining my desires for my "further research":

"Who was that research I saw you with last night?

That was no research, that was my life!"

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